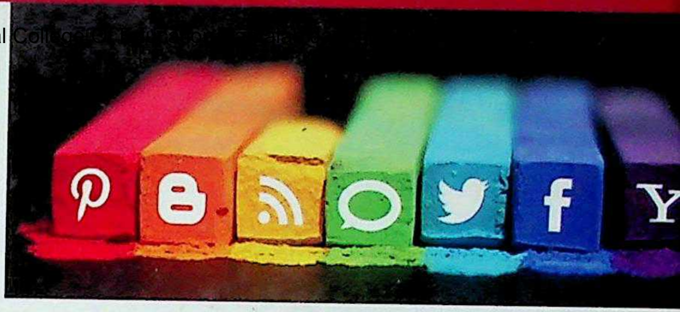

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K. John Babu

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Media and Human Rights

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Foreword

When human rights violations occur anywhere in the world, the media can play a crucial role in bringing the issue to the attention of the public and of policy-makers, creating a space for public deliberation and political action.

Consider these two examples of media-sparked public debate and political action in two different parts of the world, some 30 years apart.

In the US, when in the mid-1980s, Ryan White, a 13-year-old boy from small-town Kokomo, Indiana was diagnosed as HIV-positive and barred from attending his junior high school, the US media, which hitherto had been silent on HIV/AIDS for several years, championed his rights. By bringing to public attention the gross stigmatization and ostracization faced by White and his family, the HIV/AIDS issue rose rapidly on the national agenda, spurring legislation and public action to safeguard the rights of the afflicted and affected.

In India, the 2012 gang rape of 23-year-old female "Nirbhaya" ("fearless one") in a travelling bus in India's capital city, and her subsequent death 13 days later in a Singapore hospital, generated widespread national and international mass media coverage, leading to widespread public protests about insecurity faced by young women, and promulgation of policy legislation to create fast-track courts to hear rape cases. As a result of the media's focused coverage of "Nirbhaya," and the public and policy initiatives it spurred, more women in India felt efficacious to file a crime report when physically assaulted, demonstrating a sense of individual and collective empowerment hitherto unknown. While India has a long way to go to create a "safe" public environment for its women, "Nirbhaya" in all its tragedy, represents a beacon of publicly-constructed hope.

Whether the human rights violations are of young women or of trafficked children; of those who are HIV positive or of gays and lesbians; of the downtrodden Dalits or of the physically and mentally disabled; the mass media have an important role to play in reporting on them, stimulating public debate and in spurring policy and legislative action.

Such is the premise and the promise of the present book edited by Assistant Professor K. John Babu. With a diverse and comprehensive offering of 21 chapters, the present book provides a thorough empirical account of human rights and media coverage in the Indian context.

I invite you to read and benefit from this important book.

Prof. Arvind Singhal, Ph.D.
Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston-
Endowed Professor of Communication,
The University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, Texas, USA.

Preface

This book, a collection of highly scholarly research papers, focuses on a theoretically methodical and critical analysis of the relationship between media and human rights. The book has brought together many scholarly articles based on commendable case studies on various issues of human rights in the age of postmodern media culture; and it critically analyses the role of media, communication and information in the discipline of human rights.

The book aims at bringing in to the attention of the academic intelligentsia, including policy makers and media generators, distinct issues of human rights to ponder over. In India, much research has not been carried out on the media and human rights. Although the market-controlled media increasingly uses applied research, basic research confined to academic institutions, it steadily gains momentum. The studies compiled here have used various methods such as content analysis and case studies on different themes exclusively related to media and human rights. I am extremely thankful to the contributors for their invaluable cooperation in bringing out the book.

—Dr. K. John Babu

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Introduction to Media and Human Rights

Dr. K. John Babu

Human rights are difficult to define but perhaps they are rights that any person has as a human being. Though the principle of universality of human rights was first emphasized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, it has been reiterated in numerous international human rights conventions, declarations, and resolutions. Human Rights are: what reason requires and what conscience commands', as aptly stated in 1988 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is commonly recognized that human rights are the firm foundations of human existence and coexistence; that human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent; and that human rights lie at the heart of all that the United Nations was created for and aspires to achieve in peace and development (AMIC Compilation, 2001)

The 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights noted that it is the duty of States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems. Human rights issues became more prominent, both in public policy and public opinion during the 1990s. Many governments officially incorporated human rights principles in their policy frameworks, with legal implications. Many international institutions notable, the United Nations agencies 'mainstreamed' human rights. The media reflected this upsurge of interest in its coverage of human rights stories.

Journalists have always worked in difficult conditions in south Asia due to lack of democratic rights of freedom of the press and violation of human rights. When we see in neighbouring countries, journalists hit hard in their conflict zones. Reporting from the turbulent Pakistan, where intelligence agencies, radicals and vested interests make a hotchpotch, is a tough call as dissenting scribes are routinely bumped off. Military rules understandably placed curbs on the media.As it becomes the deadliest place to be a journalist, it requires responsible reporting, accountability and more security and protection for media people. Most of the crimes in Nepal go unreported due to a growing sense of insecurity amongst the journalists. It seems that the culprits here are bigger than the law itself. The collapse of the rule of law has led to insecurity and Nepali journalists suffer the most for doing their jobs truthfully and professionally.

In India,National Human Rights Commission is established under the protection of human rights Act in 1993.Human rights issues in India are mainly seen as human trafficking, religious violence, caste related issues, freedom of expression, use of torture by police, LGBT rights, minority rights, disabled rights andother human rights violations. In its report on human rights in India during 2013, released in 2014, Human Rights Watch stated that "India took positive steps in strengthening laws protecting women and children, and, in several important cases, prosecuting state security forces for extrajudicial killings." The report also condemned the persistent impunity for abuse linked to insurgency in Maoist areas, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur and Assam. The report also went on to state, "The fact that the government responded to public outrage confirms India's claims of a vibrant civil society. An independent judiciary and free media also acted as checks on abusive practices. However, reluctance to hold public officials to account for abuses or dereliction of duty continued to foster a culture of corruption and impunity" (World report, 2014).

Chronology of Events Regarding Human Rights in India

1829	The practice of sati was formally abolished by Governor General William Bentick after years of campaigning by hindu reform movements such as the Brahmosamaj of Ram Mohan Roy against this Orthodox Hindu funeral custom of self-immolation of widows after the death of their husbands
1929	Child marriage restraint act, prohibiting marriage of minors under 14 years of age is passed.
1947	India achieves political independence from the British Raj.

1950	The Constitution of India establishes a sovereign democratic republic with universal adult franchise. Part 3 of the Constitution contains a bill of fundamental rights enforceable by the Supreme Court and the High Courts. It also provides for reservations for previously disadvantaged sections in education, employment and political representation.
1952	Criminal Tribes Acts repealed by government, former "criminal tribes" categorized as "denotified" and habitual offenders act (1952) enacted.
1955	Reform of family law concerning Hindus gives more rights to Hindu women.
1958	Armed forces (special powers) act, 1958
1973	Supreme Court of India rules in Kesavananda Bharati case that the basic structure of the Constitution (including many fundamental rights) is unalterable by a Constitutional Amendment.
1975-77	State of emergency in India extensive rights violations take place.
1978	SC rules in Menaka Gandhi v. Union of India that the right to life under article 21 of the constitution cannot be suspended even in an emergency.
1978	Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978
1984	Operation Blue Star and the subsequent 1984 Anti-Sikh riots
1984	2006 extrajudicial disappearances in Punjab by the police
1985-86	The Shah Bano case, where the supreme court recognised the Muslim woman's right to maintenance upon divorce, sparks protests from Muslim clergy. to nullify the decision of the Supreme Court, the Rajiv Gandhi government enacted the Muslim women (protection of rights on divorce) act 1986
1987	Hashimpura massacre during communal riots in Meerut.
1989	Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (prevention of atrocities) act, 1989 is passed.
1989–Present	Kashmiri insurgency sees ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits, desecrating Hindu temples, killing of Hindus and Sikhs, and abductions of foreign tourists and government functionaries.
1992	A constitutional amendment establishes local self-government (Panchayati Raj) as a third tier of governance at the village level, with one-third of the seats reserved for women. Reservations were provided for scheduled castes and tribes as well.

1992	Babri Masjid demolished by Hindu mobs, resulting in riots across the country.
1993	National Human Rights commission is established under the protection of human rights act.
2001	Supreme Court passes extensive orders to implement the right to food.
2002	Violence in Gujarat, chiefly targeting its Muslim minority, claims many lives.
2005	A powerful right to information act is passed to give citizen's access to information held by public authorities.
2005	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) guarantees universal right to employment.
2005	Disappearance of Jaswant Singh Khalra by the Punjab police (Khalra brought to light the extra-judicial disappearances in Punjab)
2006	Supreme Court orders police reforms in response to the poor human rights record of Indian police.
2009	Delhi High Court declares that section 377 of the Indian penal code, which outlaws a range of unspecified "unnatural" sex acts, is unconstitutional when applied to homosexual acts between private consenting individuals, effectively decriminalising homosexual relationships in India.

Source: Wikipedia

Human rights in conflict hit-state: In the state of Jammu and Kashmir, human rights issues are seen as fake encounters, mass graves, extra-judicial killings by security personnel, suicide, Kashmiri insurgents, Ethnic cleansing of Hindus and Sikhs. Human rights violations crop up mainly due to militancy and Indian Armed Forces such as Indian Army, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Special Operations Group, Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. Many human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch (HRW) have condemned human rights abuses in Kashmir such as "extra-judicial executions", "disappearances", and torture, draconian laws which "provide impunity for human rights abuses and fuels cycles of violence.

Child Rights: Unfortunately many children in India do not even have the right to live, this basic right of a child. Every day over 2500 newborn children succumb to diseases that are very much preventable if action is taken on time. UNICEF in its efforts providing long-term sustainable initiatives for children that help them through all the stages of their life, right from the time they are born. It also gives awards to the television channels whoever provide the content of gender justice, sensitise the female foetus the minds of innocent children.

Dalits in media: Many dalits enter the media with a confidence hopping it can empower their community. But discrimination against themhas become common, especially in the Hindi and other language media. That's way participation of dalit in the media has been pathetically poor. BN Uniyal (In search of a dalit journalist, *The Pioneer*, 16 Nov. 1996), ShivamVij (Caste in the newsroom? *The hoot.com*, June 2004) Rabin Jefrey, (studied dozens of Indian language newspapers, visited 20 towns, interviewed more than 250 people)and Ajaz Ashraf (Untold story of dalit journalists, *Kashmir reader* 13, August 2013) thoroughly researched and reported in their anecdotes.

Reporters under threat: In India, it is becoming increasingly common to kill the messengers. Journalism with a nose for news often dig up uncomfortable facts and are killed or beaten with impunity. Greater than ever,journalists are now at riskif their stories penetrate deep into the facts or dark world of the underground. We have seen senior crime reporter, hardworking journalist, J. Day was murdered in broad daylight in Mumbai in 2011. Journalists covering conflict and crime do so at their own risk. The journalists employed in conflict zone Jammu and Kashmir are reporting amidst gunfire without even a helmet on their heads, bullet proofs to their body and insurance cover to their life. There is no safety to the reporters who are on duty in protecting human rights.

MilindKokje, executive editor of india.com said "working journalists here are given no training in how to report in hostile environments" (Media watch, July 2011) He points out the BBC conducts a course called Hefat (hostile environment first-aid training) for journalists who are sent abroad to cover conflicts. American news channel like CNN and the news agency Reuters also do the same practice.

Journalists, due to their nature of their job, need institutional protection and guarantee of the rule of law the most. In its absence, reporters face a tough dilemma- report and run the risk of being attacked, even killed or exercise self-censorship rather than speak truth to power. Urgent reform of legal protections for journalists is required in democratic nation in India.

A Journalist for Human Rights (JHR), a Canada's leading media development organization has been mobilizing media to spread human rights awareness, empowering people through rights media. JHR is a registered Canadian Charity and has been working, giving training and providing scholarship for aboriginal journalists.

Factors Filter the Human Rights News

International Council of Human Rights Policy (ICHRP, 2002) bring out six factors that filter the human rights news such as speed news, event-driven selection of news, determination of news worthiness, editorial environment, angling constrains coverage, relationship between reporter and editor

1. **Speed news:** The breaking news culture undermines editorial and ethical reflection, which is crucial to human rights reporting. There is no time for thinking on how much of news value related to human rights. Journalists' fundamental dilemma is that they must gather and produce news on a daily basis, and this hasty reporting, at the same time kill the human rights value of the story.
2. **Event-driven selection of news:** More generally, the news-driven information culture focuses on political and military events, rather than social and economic processes. When the selection of news is event-driven, it ignores or under-reports many human rights issues.
3. **Determination of newsworthiness:** The media determine what is newsworthy where press freedom exists. It is a fundamental principle of a free society that news organisations determine their agenda. It is also the essence of press freedom. It follows, annoyingly, that their news agendas often differ from the priorities of human rights activists.
4. **Editorial environment:** Human rights news competes for the attention of journalists and editors with vast amounts of other information. In most cases, the human rights angle is only one of several possible angles on a complex story. Journalists do not have a duty to privilege human rights information.
5. **Angling constrains coverage:** To select the news, editors used to follow angles which are in three questions: what is the most important feature of the story? What else has been reported recently on the same subject? What is of interest to the organisation's audience? The response to these questions determines usually the choice of angle and it is one reason why human rights angles are rarely the lead. If a story is important enough to get into the news, it is usually, not always, for other reasons. Why one angle should be favoured rather than another is a matter of the news editor's judgment.
6. **The relationship between reporter and editor:** The relationship between reporter and editor is crucial in selecting Human Rights

issues. For various reasons, this relationship has been changing. Reporters and editors are both involved in deciding what stories are identified and selected, and how they are covered. News organisations now employ more stringers, and fewer correspondents. Editors have more editorial power but also less time to monitor events. On the whole, journalists and editors were concerned about some of these trends. At the same time, they said that experienced reporters still influence the selection of stories and the quality of reporting of human rights issues.

Barrier in Reporting Good Human Rights

According to International Council of Human Rights Policy (ICHRP, 2002)there are eight impediments to good human rights reporting. They are: bias, instrumentalisation, use of biased language, selectivity, pollution, reductionism, sensationalism & negativity and absence of context.

1. **Bias:** Self-determination is central to the values of journalism. At this time, struggle with bias is unending. Political, organizational, cultural and linguistic biases all have an impact on what is selected for coverage and on how stories are written. Issues of bias also arise in that news organizations reflect the interests and perceptions of their audiences and of the region in which they are based.
2. **Instrumentalisation (Manipulation):** Frequently, human rights are used for manipulation purposes or propaganda. Many organizations, political parties or leaders abuse human rights and seek to hide the facts. Governments used to have integrated human rights in their policies with other governments. This is harder for journalists or observers to distinguish principle from national interest and human rights value. In such politicized and ambiguous environment, journalists should avoid being manipulated by organization, governments or other authorities and political parties.
3. **Use of biased language:** In reporting human rights issues, precise and careful use of terms is particularly important. Journalists should adopt fair language that doesn't has a bias. They should be critical of official use of terms and be discriminate in the use of human rights terms that have specific legal significance such as 'genocide', 'war crime', and 'proportionate force'. When the media are accused of being partisan, careless use of language is frequently a factor.

4. **Selectivity:** The media must select a news outlet only have so many pages, so much broadcasting time. Though the media should not be expected to adopt the same news agenda as human rights organisations, they have a duty to report important news from around the region and explain its significance. They are open to the criticism that some news stories are given less time than they deserve or are not explained, while others are over-reported because of availability of images or footages.
5. **Pollution:** Many stories that refer to human rights are guilty of distortions, often quite unintentionally. Primary information is shaped, massaged, received and interpreted many times over before it is delivered. Even though, pure news is a chimera. It is particularly detrimental when reports referring to human rights are too cryptic to make sense. It is damaging when reports are ambiguous, use terms with precise meanings inaccurately, draw false human rights conclusions from the evidence, or introduce inappropriate moral or ethical assumptions.
6. **Reduction:** The media tend to report the same stories in a uniform manner, which reduces critical thinking. Human rights coverage tends to be too simple, omitting the variety and complexity of human rights standards. It is to be confined geographically to certain areas of the world.
7. **Sensationalism and negativity:** Human rights stories that make the newsroom cut tend to be grim and graphic. Failure of states, of individuals, of societies and despair are emphasized, often out of context or to the exclusion of more positive processes. Legitimate reports of bad news fail to explain causes; reports often stigmatise or stereotype local actors and societies as a result.
8. **Absence of context:** Human rights issues are rarely put in proper context. Key historical, social or economic background is often omitted. At a certain point, the failure to explain undermines the ability of reports to communicate information that is essential if audiences are to understand events. This can be particularly important in stories that have a human rights dimension.

Most of the above factors and barriers are influencing in determine news on human rights in conflict regions in India. For instance, political, organizational, cultural and linguistic biases all have an impact on what is selected for coverage and on how stories are written.

In-depth Reporting Vs Parachute journalism: Human rights reporting essentially need in-depth reporting not parachute journalism. Parachute journalism means journalists who fly in to a country and news story, often at short notice and with little background knowledge, file their story often based on a limited array of local sources and then fly home again. The inference embedded in the term is that this produces superficial and sometimes spurious news stories that can be manipulated by key sources.

Conclusion

Human rights issues become 'human interest stories', forced to adhere to certain emotional clichés. Human rights involve questions of law, morality and political philosophy as well as practical problems of application and enforcement. According to United Nations Human Rights (UNHR), Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Varied reasons, factors and barriers influence media coverage on human rights issues either private or public owned.

Above discussed six factors that filter the human rights news and eight impediments to good human rights reporting can be seen in many places. After filtering factors and barriers, we can also trace out two main aspects that more influence on media coverage of human rights. They are 'convergence of media technology' and 'the modern editorial culture'. All these factors together or some tend to cause the media to misrepresent or marginalize human rights issues that by professional criteria ought to be reported more fully or accurately. The editorial process being itself a form of filtering, the question becomes which filters operate. The agenda in a newsroom is determined essentially first by its reporting and editorial decision making processes, and then by the organisation's editorial culture — which in turn is influenced by various external and internal factors.

Another important thing is competition between news providers, whether in print or electronic media, leads them to focus on presentation more than content. Unfortunately, content in text or programmes are built around the style of the language or presenters, or otherwise personalized, by focusing on antagonistic debate. Journalism should have focused more on facts-on-the-ground and what-happened-when. In the case of Kunan Poshpora, dual perceptions of media created huge mystification among the people. The duty of journalists is not to redress wrongs but report news objectively. Professionally, they feel no duty to pursue an issue in which public interest is waning. The fact that human rights is both an international code of law, entailing specific legal obligations, and a discourse that appeals powerfully to the emotions further complicates reporting.

Most journalists believe that the function of news organizations is to obtain information, verify it and make it known. Their function is not to consider what ought to be done with the information they circulate - though many journalists do consider they have a particular responsibility to defend the values of human rights.

The media, both national and local, has to play an enormously important role with objectivity in the protecting human rights. They expose human rights violations and serve as medium for different voices to be heard. But journalists and the media themselves are put at risk when reporting critical human rights issues. Proper training is needed on human rights reporting and working in hostile environments like in Kashmir.

Training should be given to the journalists by the government media agencies or non-government organizations in the lines of 'Rights Media' of Journalists for Human Rights in Canada. 'Rights media' is the process of writing, collecting, editing, producing and distributing media that creates societal dialogue on human rights issues. Main aim of 'Rights Media' is mainstreams human rights content into everyday news stories. To achieve this, media organizations such as Press Council of India (PCI), Press Institute of India (PII) or any other International NGOs should provide the platform for local media practitioners to produce effective media on human rights. Learning modules on human rights for academic and training institutions could be prepared by International organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF as they provided for Communication for Development (C4D). Universities and Colleges necessarily incorporate the subject of Human rights reporting in their syllabus. When media puts the spotlight on human rights, people start to talk about the issues and demand change. When human rights are protected, authorities are more accountable and peoples' lives get better.

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Section I

MEDIA COVERAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Chapter 1

Coverage of Human Rights News in the Indian Press: An Analysis of Select Dailies

Prof. D. V. R. Murthy

Human rights issues have assumed significance in the 20th century in the international arena on account of international efforts made by the United Nations. The important principle, 'men are born free and equal in dignity' is the fulcrum on which the issue of human rights gains its importance. In particular, by the end of the First World War, the concept of economic, social and cultural rights has been added to the already existing political and civil rights (Bajwa, 1995: 31). However, the rise of labor unions led to the collective bargaining for higher wages and the reduction of working hours. More over, the Second World War marked a turning point in the development of international concern for human rights. Because of the brutal suppression of the individual in Nazi Germany and Italy, the United Nations made concerted efforts to recognize the rights of the individual, and hence the concept of human rights received an institutional support. In this context, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human rights on December 10. 1948. The Preamble states:

> *Whereas*, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of the members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

In light of these developments, the Constituent Assembly incorporated Article 14 and Article 21 in the Indian Constitution. Article 14 embodies the general principle of equality before law and prohibits unreasonable restrictions between persons. Further, Article 21 says that "no person shall be deprived of his life of personal liberty except accordance to procedure established by law".

Further, with the recognition that the media would play a key intervention role, the United Nations in December 1986, expanded the definition of the Universal Declaration by including the Right to Development (Bhattacharjea, 2008). Specifically, access to education, health services, food, housing, employment and fair distributions of income were mentioned. Measures to ensure that women have an active role in development were stressed. Thus, the United Nations (1987) defined human rights as "those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to fully develop and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents, and our conscience, and to satisfy our spiritual and other needs.

Human Rights Violation and Indian Express Investigation

Although the courts and governments have the primary duty to preserve the human rights, the media too can act as a watchdog to bring to the notice of the government and the courts the excesses of human rights violation. In this context, the media as a fourth pillar in a democracy has social responsibility to protect and preserve human rights. Nevertheless, media coverage of human rights issues needs to be recognized as media can mass educate the people in the country. Two case studies are presented where *Indian Express* played a vital role to expose human rights violations.

For instance, on October 11, 1980, the Delhi edition of the *Indian Express* published a news item "10 undertrials blame police for losing sight." It concerned a habeas corpus petition moved in the Supreme Court on behalf of under trial prisoners in Bhagalpur jail in Bihar who "alleged that the police deprived them of their eyesight by using acid".

The sketchy report did not attract the notice of the government. But, on November 22, 1980 the front page of the paper displayed the picture of a blinded man under the heading "Eyes punctured twice to ensure total blindness." The news report filed by Arun Sinha, the Patna Correspondent of the newspaper, drew the attention of the people while the then Bihar Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra reluctantly ordered an inquiry. Two days later, the matter was raised in Parliament. The weeklies took up the story, and published more close-ups of the blinded prisoners, with gory details of eyeballs being pierced with cycle spokes and acid poured into them (Bhattacharjea, 2008). The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi while expressing her concern asked the then Chief Minister to take necessary action. As a result, the chief Minister suspended 15 policemen on November 30, 1980. The expose continued with

Indian Express Executive Editor Arun Shourie writing two front-page articles criticizing the administrative, police and jail procedures which allowed such atrocities to take place (Verghese, 2005:180-181).

Public education is one of the key responsibilities of the media because through information dissemination, the media can frame issues while setting an agenda. More over, studies have found out that news media play a vital role in conveying information to the public about human rights. While conveying information the media can interpret and analyze the issues that have concern for the public. Bernard Cohen (1963) explained that the news media filter or select issues for readers or viewers attention and set the public's agenda telling people not what to think but what to think about. For example, in 1994, Indian Express carried out a campaign against ill treatment meted out to the inmates of three hospitals for mental care located in three states viz., Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. On July 10, 1994, the paper carried a front-page story filed by Usha Rai and Siraj Qureshi on the hospital for mental care with a headline, 'Mental hospital worse than a jail'. The intro depicted the picture of the hospital:

> Agra- The Agra Hospital for Mental care, one of the oldest institutes for the mentally sick in the country, has become a hell-hole for its inmates... The hospital seems to have become the dumping ground for unwanted and inconvenient relatives, the mentally retarded (who have no business to be there), half-crazed vagrants picked off the streets by the police and forgotten and of course, the genuinely sick patients who still flock to the hospital, hoping to be free of that ringing sound in their ears, the deep depressions and convulsions of inexplicable violence.

The paper wrote another story on July 11, 1994 edition about issuing a death certificate to an inmate at the insistence of relatives with a headline, 'Death certificate for living'. The victim was put in the hospital for mental care for a period of 32 years without any treatment.

The story began like this:

> *Agra*: Romeshwar Dayal Sharma (60) has property worth Rs 1.25 crore in Shimla and Agra. But since 1962, Dayal- with two doctors of the hospital maintain is sane- has been locked up. It is of little comfort to him that he enjoys the status of a first class patient.
>
> What is even more shocking is that on September 2, 1982 on application moved by his younger brother Raminder Dayal, Romeshwar Dayal's death certificate was issued by the District magistrate of Agra. No one knows if there was a mock funeral to put the final embellishments on the con game.

> But it was only at the end of October last year that the Hospital authorities came to know of the fraud perpetrated on Romeshwar Dayal. Mr. S L Khanna an advocate whose son-in-law was a tenant in the Dayal property in Shimla- seeking to protect Romeshwar Dayal' interests – moved a writ petition in the H P High Court… and could resurrect him.

Further, the paper carried a story on the doctors' role on July 12, 1994, with a headline, 'Of doctors' dual roles and double incomes'. The essence of the story is …in Agra's '*daktar ki mandi*' where doctors mint money and every lane and by lane has a doctor's sign board, where little sheds become clinics overnight, such inconvenient questions are neither asked nor tolerated…

In response to the public interest litigation, the Supreme Court delivered the judgment on September 8, setting up autonomous management committees at the three mental hospitals in Agra, Ranchi and Gwalior, delinking the government interference. The Indian Express in its editorial on September 12, 1994 commented:

> …The court found it necessary to intervene because of public interest petitions in the wake of reports in Indian Express exposing the pathetic conditions in the hospitals at Agra and Ranchi. The more surprising thing is that the issue of the conditions in the hospitals for mental care has not evoked much interest in the state legislatures. It is the apathy of politicians towards important social matters like health that makes it a difficult… The court's laudable intervention should only be a rare gesture, and it is the business of the governments to keep mental hospitals under their care in proper shape, because the inmates are helpless and vulnerable.

Methodology

The present study was taken up against this background to ascertain the coverage given to human rights issues in the Indian newspapers. The study selected four newspapers- two English newspapers and two Telugu newspapers published from Visakhapatnam City. These four newspapers are The Hindu, Indian Express, Andhra Jyothi and Eenadu. Also, the study proposed to examine the differential coverage to human rights issues vis-à-vis other developmental issues during 1990s and 2000s. Therefore, two years- 1995 and 2008 were selected for analysis of human rights news published in four dailies by drawing an appropriate sample.

Universe and sample: The universe for this study comprises all the editions of the four selected dailies published during the calendar year i.e., January 1, 1995 to December 31, 1995 and January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

Sampling procedure: While selecting the sample, keeping in view the time and financial resources available for the researcher, it was thought that a sample of 10% of all the editions of the four newspapers would be sufficient. This sample, selected randomly, would be adequate for generalising to the universe (Stempel, 1952; Riffe et. al., 1993). Two methods were adopted to select the editions to constitute the study sample: 1) Continuous week, and 2) constructed week.

The sample selection was done in two stages:

(i) **Stage one:** A continuous week sampling method was adopted to select randomly three continuous weeks (one continuous week comprises days from Monday to Sunday) from all the weeks in the designated time period – January 1, 1995 to December 31, 1995 and *January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008*. In order to select the required weeks through this method, the sample year was divided into 3 sub-periods, that is, i) January, February, March and April; ii) May, June, July and August; iii) September, October, November and December. Then three weeks, that is one each from the three sub-periods were randomly selected.

(ii) **Stage two:** The second stage comprised a constructed week method (Budd et. al., 1967). For this purpose seven days of the week were randomly selected from each sub-period to construct a week. That means, a Monday, a Tuesday, a Wednesday, a Thursday, a Friday, a Saturday and a Sunday were selected randomly from all Mondays, Tuesdays ...etc., of each of the sub-period. Thus, three constructed weeks were selected from the three sub –periods of the sample year.

All in all, the following weeks were selected through continuous week and consecutive method making up for three weeks of the sample in each period.

Continuous week

1995 sample

Sub – period - I	:	February 6 to February 12,
Sub – period - II	:	July 10 to July 16
Sub – period - III	:	November 27 to November 30, and December 1 to December 3
No. of days	:	21
Total No. of editions	:	84

2008 sample

Sub – period - I : April 6 to April 12
Sub – period - II : July 13 to July 19
Sub – period - III : Sept 21 to Sept 27
Number of days : 21
Total number of editions : 84

Constructed week

The following days of the week were selected through constructed week method making up for the three weeks of the sample.

1995 sample

Sub – period - I : January 6, January 11, March 16, March 27, April 9, April 18 and April 22
Sub – period - II : May 30, June 17, July 3, July 5, August 10 and August 13
Sub- period - III : September 4, September 20, October 19, October 21, October 27, November 26 and December 19
No. of days : 21
Total No. of editions : 84

2008 sample

Sub – period - I : January 2, January 8, February 8, February 18, March 9, March 22, and April 17
Sub – period - II : May 10, May 29, June 2, June 27, July 23, August 19 and August 31
Sub- period - III : September 5, October 16, October 25, November 5, November 24, December 21, and December 30
Number of days : 21
Total number of editions : 84

Since no public holidays occurred during these 42 days, all the editions of the four newspapers published on these days were considered for analysis. Thus, basing on the continuous and constructed week methods, there were 42 editions per daily and a total of 168 editions for four sample dailies came up for analysis in each year.

Unit of analysis. The unit of analysis for this study consisted of all the news items, published in the front page and inside pages of four selected dailies. Operationally, a news item is defined as, 'a news item is any item dealing with timely event with current dateline. It is defined as an account of events reported by the paper's own correspondents or reporters and wire service stories. Human interest stories are included in this item (Parthasarathy, 1984: 107-108)'.

Subject categories. Following are the subject categories used in the present study.

(a) Health
(b) Education
(c) Literacy
(d) Transport and Communication
(e) Agriculture
(f) Industry
(g) Housing
(h) Population control
(i) Energy
(j) Ecology
(k) Human rights
(l) National integration

Specifically human rights news includes reports of human rights organizations, lock-up death cases, remission of prisoners, exploitation of children, child labour, bonded labour, street children, and other news involving violation of human rights.

Measurement. The units of analysis, coded into various subject categories, were measured both in terms of their frequencies and space. While all the units of analysis were counted in terms of frequencies, as regards the measurement of space, only the news items were considered for the purpose and recorded in the code-sheet in terms of space. The frequencies of the news items which appeared on the front page and inside pages were recorded separately. As regards space, all news items were measured in cubic centimeters with a standard wooden scale. The space of all news items was separately recorded for the front page and inside pages of each newspaper. When a news item continued from the front page to inside pages, it was treated as front page news item and accordingly the recording was made. When a photograph accompanied a news item, it was also treated as part of the news item.

Results

The study has analyzed 2904 news items covering two years-1995 and 2008. As many as 1086 news items in 1995 and 1818 in 2008 have under the analysis. Further *Eenadu* has published more news items in 1995 while *Andhra Jyothi* has published more news items in 2008 (Table 1). Table 2 reveals that in 1995 the Hindu has allocated only 2.9 per cent of frequency of news items to human rights while agriculture and health issues received first and second ranks respectively. More over, Indian Express, allocated 21 per cent of news items to human rights, the highest among the four dailies. Among the two Telugu dailies, *Andhra Jyothi* (8.7%) gave more coverage to human rights as compared to *Eenadu* (5.2%).But in terms of space allocation, *Indian Express* (20.2%) allocated more space to human rights as compared to other three dailies. However, as compared to other three dailies, *The Hindu* gave importance to agriculture by giving it the first rank among all other categories, while the two Telugu dailies covered transport & communication with first priority (see Table 3). It is evident from further analysis of newspapers that two newspapers- The Hindu and Eenadu did not dedicate a single news item to human rights on the front page. But Express published four news items and Jyothi one news item on the front page in 1995 (Table 4). Even in the inside pages, human rights coverage received less priority in three dailies out of four excluding Indian Express. Health issue received more coverage across the four dailies in 1995 (Table 5).

Surprisingly, the three newspapers- *The Hindu, Indian Express,* and *Jyothi* did not cover human rights issue, while *Eenadu* covered two news items in 2008 (See Table 6). Even the allocation os space was negligible (Table 7). Those two news items in *Eenadu* appeared in the inside pages in 2008 (Table 8). More over, all the four dailies gave importance to health and education themes more coverage as compared to other themes.

Table 1: Distribution of total number of news items between human rights vs other categories in 1995 and 2008

Daily	1995	2008
The Hindu	246	458
Indian Express	209	194
Andhra Jyothi	195	584
Eenadu	436	582

Table 2: Percentage distribution of frequency of news items on human rights vs other categories in 1995

Theme	DAILIES											
	The Hindu			Indian Express			Andhra Jyothi			Eenadu		
	f	Per cet	Rank Order	f	Per cent	Rank Order	f	Per cebt	Rank Order	f	Per cebt	Rank Order
Health	47	19.1	2	44	21.0	1	52	26.7	1	81	18.6	1
Education	10	4.1	8	18	8.6	4	8	4.1	7	49	11.2	4
Literacy	9	3.6	9	4	1.9	9	3	1.5	10	19	4.3	9
Transport & Communication	22	8.9	5	17	8.2	5	34	17.4	2	79	18.1	2
Agriculture	49	19.9	1	18	8.6	4	27	13.8	3	48	11.0	5
Industry	14	5.7	7	20	9.6	2	15	7.7	6	36	8.3	6
Housing	1	0.4	12	6	2.9	8	5	2.5	8	20	4.6	8
Population planning	8	3.3	10	4	1.9	9	2	1.0	11	2	0.6	12
Energy	29	11.8	4	19	9.2	3	20	10.3	4	50	11.5	3
Ecology	33	13.4	3	12	5.7	6	8	4.3	7	15	3.4	10
Human rights	17	6.9	6	44	21.0	1	17	8.7	5	23	5.2	7
National Integration	7	2.9	11	3	1.4	10	4	2.0	9	14	3.2	11
N =	246	100		209	100		195	100		436	100	

Table 3: Percentage distribution of Space by human rights vs other themes in the sample dailies in 1995

Theme	DAILIES											
	The Hindu			Indian Express			Andhra Jyothi			Eenadu		
	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order
Health	547.5	11.4	4	633.3	16.9	2	536.8	19.6	2	809.5	14.2	2
Education	168.5	3.6	8	242.4	6.4	7	173.2	6.3	6	609.5	10.7	5
Literacy	168.2	3.5	9	94.9	2.6	10	43.2	1.6	11	262.9	4.6	8
Transport & Communication	525.8	11.0	5	232.3	6.2	8	597.9	21.9	1	1091.7	19.2	1
Agriculture	1289.2	26.9	1	418.4	11.1	4	447.6	16.3	3	785.2	13.9	3
Industry	301.6	6.3	6	309.1	8.2	5	187.6	6.8	5	541.3	9.5	6
Housing	28.1	0.6	12	107.5	2.9	9	130.7	4.8	8	331.6	5.8	7
Population planning	160.9	3.3	10	61.6	1.6	12	11.7	0.4	12	12.4	0.2	12
Energy	620.4	13.0	3	550.3	14.8	3	267.9	9.8	4	735.3	12.9	9
Ecology	640.5	13.4	2	274.4	7.3	6	118.4	4.3	9	196.3	3.4	9
Human rights	226.9	4.9	7	760.2	20.2	1	163.6	6.2	7	164.9	2.9	10
National Integration	98.4	2.0	11	68.2	1.8	11	55.3	2.0	10	149.9	2.6	11
N=	4776.0	100		3751.6	100		2753.8	100		5690.5	100	

Table 4: Percentage distribution of news items for different categories on the front page in 1995

Theme	DAILIES							
	The Hindu		Indian Express		Andhra Jyothi		Eenadu	
	fr	Space	fr	Space	fr	Space	fr	Space
Health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	-	-	1	12.3	-	-	-	-
Literacy	-	-	1	30.6	-	-	1	23.9
Transport & Communication	1	12.9	2	27.1	1	69.4	1	18.4
Agriculture	-	-	1	6.4	4	214.8	4	84.7
Industry	-	-	-	-	1	34.7	2	61.6
Housing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Population planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Energy	2	46.8	1	20.2	2	45.5	10	241.9
Ecology	-	-	2	93.6	-	-	-	-
Human rights	-	-	4	51.1	1	22.2	-	-
National Integration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
N =	3 (1.2%)	59.7 (1.3%)	12 (5.7%)	241.3 (6.4%)	9 (4.6%)	386.6 (14.0%)	18 (4.1%)	430.5 (7.6%)

Table 5: Distribution of news items and space for different news items in the inside pages in 1995

DAILIES	D A I L I E S							
	The Hindu		Indian Express		Andhra Jyothi		Eenadu	
	fr	Space	fr	Space	fr	Space	fr	Space
Health	19.3	11.6	22.3	18.0	28.0	22.9	19.4	15.4
Education	4.1	3.6	8.6	6.6	4.3	7.4	11.7	11.6
Literacy	3.7	3.6	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.8	4.3	4.5
Transport & Communication	8.6	10.9	7.6	5.8	17.7	22.5	18.7	20.4
Agriculture	20.2	27.3	8.6	11.7	12.4	9.9	10.5	13.3
Industry	5.8	6.4	10.1	8.8	7.5	6.5	8.1	9.1
Housing	0.4	0.6	3.0	3.1	2.7	5.6	4.8	6.3
Population planning	3.3	3.4	2.0	1.7	1.1	0.6	0.5	0.2
Energy	11.9	13.1	9.2	15.2	9.7	9.5	9.6	9.5
Ecology	12.8	12.6	5.2	5.2	4.3	5.0	3.6	3.7
Human rights	7.0	4.8	20.2	20.2	8.6	6.0	5.5	3.1
National Integration	2.9	2.1	1.6	1.9	2.1	2.3	3.3	2.9
N =	(243)	(4716.3)	(197)	(3510.2)	(186)	(2347.3)	(418)	(5260.1)

Table 6: Distribution of new items for human rights vs other categories in 2008

Theme	DAILIES											
	The Hindu			Indian Express			Andhra Jyothi			Eenadu		
	Fr	%	Rank Order	fr	%	Rank Order	fr	%	Rank Order	fr	%	Rank Order
Human rights										2	0.3	10
Health	52	11.4	4	54	27.8	1	74	12.7	2	66	11.3	2
Education	160	35.0	1	34	17.5	2	324	55.5	1	344	59.1	1
Literacy												
Transport & Communication	18	3.9	7	14	7.2	6	4	0.7	9	16	2.8	7
Agriculture	54	11.8	3	14	7.2	6	48	8.2	4	46	7.9	3
Industry	86	18.8	2	24	12.4	4	20	3.4	7	18	3.1	6
Housing	4	0.9	8	2	1.0	8	2	0.3	10	20	3.5	5
Population planning	4	0.9	8				22	3.8	6	8	1.4	8
Energy	46	10	5	18	9.3	5	54	9.2	3	42	7.2	4
Ecology	34	7.4	6	28	14.5	3	12	2.1	8	12	2.1	8
National Integration				6	3.1	7	24	4.1	5	8	1.4	9
N =	458	100		194	100		584	100		582	100	

Table 7: Distribution of space for news items between human rights and other categories in the sample dailies in 2008

Theme	DAILIES											
	The Hindu			Indian Express			Andhra Jyothi			Eenadu		
	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order
Human rights				108	2.2	8				72	0.8	11
Health	1650.4	15.6	2	1372.6	28.2	1	1343.4	13.3	2	1634.2	18.1	2
Education	3595.4	34	1	711	14.7	3	5016.4	49.5	1	1733.1	19.2	1
Literacy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transport & Communication	479.8	4.6	7	441	9.1	6	86.4	0.9	9	1027.6	11.3	5
Agriculture	1523.4	14.4	4	282.2	5.8	7	1271	12.5	3	1212.6	13.4	4
Industry	1583	15.1	3	698.6	14.3	4	483.2	4.8	5	576.8	6.4	7
Housing	115.8	1.1	8	44	0.9	9	48	0.5	10	1243.6	13.7	3
Population planning	55	0.5	9				294.2	2.9	7	151	1.7	10
Energy	941.6	8.9	5	453.2	9.3	5	869	8.6	4	669.2	7.4	6
Ecology	616.6	5.8	6	756.4	15.5	2	272	2.7	8	233	2.6	9
National Integration							438	4.3	6	484.8	5.4	8
N=	10561	100		4867	100		10121.6	100		9037.9	100	

Table 8: Percentage distribution of frequency of news items and space by human rights vs other categories in inside pages in the sample dailies in 2008

Theme	DAILIES											
	The Hindu			Indian Express			Andhra Jyothi			Eenadu		
	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order	Space	%	Rank Order
Human rights				108	2.2	8				72	0.8	11
Health	1650.4	15.6	2	1372.6	28.2	1	1343.4	13.3	2	1634.2	18.1	2
Education	3595.4	34	1	711	14.7	3	5016.4	49.5	1	1733.1	19.2	1
Literacy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transport & Communication	479.8	4.6	7	441	9.1	6	86.4	0.9	9	1027.6	11.3	5
Agriculture	1523.4	14.4	4	282.2	5.8	7	1271	12.5	3	1212.6	13.4	4
Industry	1583	15.1	3	698.6	14.3	4	483.2	4.8	5	576.8	6.4	7
Housing	115.8	1.1	8	44	0.9	9	48	0.5	10	1243.6	13.7	3
Population planning	55	0.5	9				294.2	2.9	7	151	1.7	10
Energy	941.6	8.9	5	453.2	9.3	5	869	8.6	4	669.2	7.4	6
Ecology	616.6	5.8	6	756.4	15.5	2	272	2.7	8	233	2.6	9
National Integration							438	4.3	6	484.8	5.4	8
N =	10561	100		4867	100		10121.6	100		9037.9	100	

Conclusion

The study finds that the human rights news received considerable coverage in 1990s while in 2008, human rights news was neglected. The priority of newspapers is increasingly shifting towards commercial issues as compared to people-centric issues like human rights, transport and agriculture. The study finds that the human rights issues are being ignored in the Indian dailies. Further, the 2008 study finds that the theme education ranked number one in the three newspapers, viz., The Hindu, Andhra Jyothi and Eenadu, while The Indian Express gave the top rank to health. Health issues received emphasis because of health awareness campaigns launched by the central and state governments to counter the rise of seasonal diseases like diarrhoea, malnutrition and AIDS and polio. The Hindu, Andhra Jyothi and Eenadu gave prominence to education in terms of the number of news items. In 2008, the achievements of the corporate educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh received wide coverage in these newspapers such as the announcements of examination results, and the introduction of new education programmes in the colleges and universities, the opening of new engineering and technical courses in the state. Mostly, these news items appeared because these educational institutions issued huge advertisements to these newspapers (See Table 9).

Table 9: Top advertisements in the print media in 2008

Categories	Ad volume	Rank
Educational institutions	17891	1
Social advertisements	14954	2
Independent retailers	7102	3
Properties/real estates	6606	4
Cars/jeeps	6381	5
Corporate/brand image	5711	6
Events	3466	7
Coaching centre/competitive exams	3461	8
Hospital/clinics	3344	9
Travel & tourism	3197	10

Source: Kohli-Khandekhar, V (2010). Indian media business (Third edition). New Delhi: Sage: P 4

The media in India though is active in respect of covering some human rights issues, the masses need to be educated on the human rights violence. Since the mass media can act as a public educator, they can take up human rights issues seriously. The intensity of coverage of human rights violations may deter the violators as well as abusers, particularly, in the cases related to dowry harassment, bonded labour. Nevertheless, the media can also play an advocacy role in this regard in dealing with human rights issues. The study emphasizes that the human rights issues needs to be highlighted because in the wake of globalization, the human rights violation becomes an issue of contention, and the poor and the marginalized sections of society face the brunt of corporate giants as well as the governments.

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Chapter 2

Human Rights View Point of Naxalite Movement (1999 – 2006): An Analysis of Press Coverage in India

Dr. J. Madhu Babu & S. Mumtaj

Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to ascertain the differential coverage given to news stories related to human rights of civil movement by selected four news papers. When the state continues to portrait the Naxalite movement as a law and order problem, academicians projects Naxalism as a social movement. Social workers view it as a problem of backwardness and poverty. Real problem of Naxalism is rather democratic rights to come out of deeply rooted poverty. Naxalite movement is result of pestering feelings of people who are facing social problems such as unemployment, rising debts and suicides, growing bankruptcies of business, imperialist policy and devastation, state sponsored terror, murderous gangs and rising inequalities.

Key words: Human Rights, Naxalite, Maoist, Counter insurgency,Vigilante groups, Encounters, Operation Green hunt

Meaning and Definition of Human Rights

Human rights are the rights that everyone has by virtue of his/her being human. They aregrounded in our appeal to human nature. Human rights pertain to all persons and are posed by everybody in the world because they are human beings. They are earned, bought or inherited not are they created by any contractual under taking. Human rights are concerned with the dignity of the individual-the level of self-esteem that secures personal identity and promotes human community. J. C. Johari (1996) defines "the color of the skin may be white or black, the level of mental make –up may be high or low, the way of life of a people may be modern or private to the core, the essential reality of all belonging to human race cannot be dismissed by any stretch of imagination".

Origin of World Human Rights

The concept of Human rights, special mention should be made of the role played by the Magna Carta (1215), Petition of Rights (1627) and the Bill of Rights (1688) in England, the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizens (1791) of France adopted after the French revolution and especially the Bill of Rights (1787) of the USA. These civil and political rights constitute the sources of the first generation of the modern concept of human rights. The Russian revolution under the Bolshik slogan of "bread, land and power to be Soviets" inspired the Soviet Bill of Rights (1937).

These, along with the post-war era concern for the right of self - determination of colonial world, and against race and/or gender discrimination, have paved the path for the unanimous adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December, 1948, signed by India amongst by others.

History of Indian Civil Liberty movements

The first organization came up was a 1947, the Madras Civil Liberties Union (MCLU). In the mean time, a Bombay Civil Liberties conference was held on 1-2 January, 1949. They organized All India Civil conference in Madras on 16- 17 July 1949. In 1948, The Communist party ofIndia (CPI) was banned and all-out severe repression on its members and sympathizers unfolded a Civil Liberty committee was formed in west Bengal 1949.

The resurgence of The Civil Liberty movement begins only in 1970 of the last century on new more or less independent planes with the formation of the 'Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights' (APDR) in 1972. In Andhra Pradesh too, Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC) was formed in1974.The main demands at that time centered on putting an end to all those inhuman, illegal undemocratic acts of the state, release of all political prisoners and the repeal of the black acts like Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). International support came from the international civil rights organizations like Amnesty International.

During this infamous Emergency period, an all India civil rights organization, the People's Union for Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights (PUCLDR) gradually took shape in 1976, with Jayaprakash Narayan as its moral spirit. In the 1977 parliamentary elections, the repressive government was defeated, and PUCLDR played a significant role in mobilizing the people against the ruling clique.

The year 1980 saw the return of Indira Gandhi to power. A consensus emerged among civil liberties activists and various political parties that such an organization should remain non-partisan. The organization was re-christened as the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL). Dr. K. Balagopal Telugu essay Cheekatikonaluwas a path-breaking one, in which he directly questioned the following sharp differences of opinion with the APCLC on how to respond revolutionary violence, he left APCLC and formed the Human Rights Forum (HRF).

Naxalite Movement: An Over View

Naxalite movement is political in nature but has distinct social and economic roots. The movement, as part of the peoples struggle has taken different forms and adopted a variety of strategies and instrument during long course. There has been correspondingly a series of actions on the part of the state and its agencies. The Naxalite movement derives from a small village Naxalbari on the junction of India, Nepal and East Pakistan (presently Bangladesh).Where tribal's took up arms against the oppression of the land lords in 1967.The movement spread to different parts of the country. The term Naxalite came to symbolize and individual who took up arms in a bid to over throw the entrenched status quo in favor of the down trodden there are close to 40 groups in the country professing adherence to the philosophy of Marxism, Leninism and Maoism. The Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCC) and the CPI (ML) People's War merged to form a new entity, the Communist Party of India –Maoist (CPI-Maoist) on September 21, 2004. Officially, the merger was announced on October 14, 2004. Following the merger, the outfit is active in 156 districts of 13 states of India. The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, admits the spread of Naxalite movement to 76 districts in 9 states of the Indian Union.

Extra Judicial Killings

The practice of 'extra judicial killings', popularly known as 'encounters' came into vogue from around 1968 as method of containing the Naxalite movement. The state used to carry out such killings in areas declared as disturbed areas. The A. P. Suppression of Disturbance Act 1947 was aimed at containing the spread of the Communist movement in the erstwhile Madras Presidency. During the period of emergency, about 77 persons were killed in the manner which was considered a large number in those days, (Mohanty, 1977). As a part of the general criticism of authoritarian governance during Emergency, the practice of encounters got highlighted, particularly in the context of the opposition of LokNayak Jaya Prakash Narayan to the execution of unlawful orders by officials. He appointed an unofficial committee headed by Justice V. M. Tarkunde. Investigations by the Tarkunde Committee led to the appointment of a one person commission of inquiry under the 1956 Act by the Andhra Pradesh Government. In 1978,the Andhra Pradesh Government appointed Justice V.Bhargva to enquire into these killings, (Madhu Babu,2010).

The National Human Rights Commission visited the state to assess the problem and enlist the opinions of the victims of Naxalite Violence. Later, it also issued directives to the state governments to change the procedure while probing encounter deaths. Similarly, Asia Watch, the international human rights group indicted the state government on the issue of rural killings in Andhra Pradesh, while Amnesty International brought out an issue on encounter killings. The High Court responding to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL)Petition appointed the Advocates Committee to examine the problem of Naxalism, even as the political leaders of the different shades voiced their concern over Naxalism, (Steven son, 1998).

Article 19 and article 21 of the Indian Constitution guarantee the basic freedoms and right to life and liberty. They can be no improvement in the human rights situation in the country. The Protection of Human Rights as stated in the protection of Human Rights Acts 1993 is dependent on the nature of governance, the nature of economic and social policies the state adopts, and the degree to which they ensure equity and justice, thus making the protection of human rights and governance two sides of the same coin. In India, at present the separation of the people's freedom of speech and expression and frequent attacks on dignity of the common citizens is assuming alarming proportions.

In the name of combating terrorism, the minority community is being discriminately targeted. A large number of violations of civil liberties and human rights are also taking place. It is ordinary people across the country resist the transformation of land by snatching away their land, water, forest and giving them for mining industries, real-estates for housing and military usage. The development strategy of the state gets huge opposition from the people as it create difficulty to their life and habitats. People strongly reject looting of resources by the corporate agencies. The principle of ‘eminent dominance’ is being challenged by the people. The government, both the center and the state, is using suppressive methods and color the struggles as the 'Maoist'. Most of them are democratic way of struggles without giving choice to arms. With this social movement, people are challenging the basic legitimacy of the state. Several thousand of people are under detention and encounters have become normal. Central government not only moved forces like Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Secretary Force (BSF) and Operation Green hunt (OGH) other paramilitary forces in some states of Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh but also showing it's a fight against Maoist armed resistance. The so called civilians of the SalwaJudumare basically the Special Police Officer (SPO)'s and 'lumpen' elements mobilized by the state as a vigilante force to kill, burn, loot and destroy tribal life in countering the Maoists, (Azad, 2006). Hundreds of members of the state-sponsored SalwaJudum militia continued to be integrated into a 6000 strong auxiliary police force, despite concerns over their involvement in human rights violation, (Amnesty International Report, 2013).

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the frequency and extent of space allocated to human rights issues
2. To find out the priority given to human rights in naxalite movement on the front page and inside pages as well
3. To find out the direction of treatment of the human rights issue
4. To study the state attitudes towards human rights in naxalite movement.

Method

The researcher has primarily used qualitative and quantitative content analysis for the study, as it is a technique for systematically describing written, spoken or visual communication. The researcher has ventured an attempt to analyze the content, position, space, and elements of front page and inside page in newspapers published in eight years of time period. The coding unit was the individual issue.

Selection of Newspapers

Four news papers were selected two each from English (The Hindu and the New Indian Express) and Telugu (Eenadu and Vaartha) for this purpose.

Sampling Procedure

The Universe for this study comprises all the editions of the four selected dailies published during the calendar years i.e. January 1, 1999 to December 31, 2006. This study was based on purposive sample. Two steps were adopted to select the editions (dates) to constitute the study.

First step: The researcher is identified 100 major incidents in study period.

Second step: The researcher has examined the consequences of the major incidents.

Units of Analysis: The units of analysis for this study consisted two categories: news stories and photographs.

Subject Categories: Keeping in a view of the objectives of the study, three main subject categories have been identified i.e.

1. *Legal issue of Human rights*: It covers news stories published on legal cases of human rights related to Naxalites filed in courts, judgments and enquiry commissions appointed by the governments, reports of official committees etc.
2. *Human rights Organizations*: It consist the voice of various human rights organizations such as state, national and International level, their notes, reports, comments, accusations and suggestions on human rights violations in India.
3. *Naxalite related other stories*: News stories of Naxalites other than human rights kept in this category. It was in turn divided into sub-categories a. Naxalite activities, (b) Encounter deaths (c) Police activities (d) Agony of sufferers (e) Government views (f) Political party views (g) people's reactions (h) peace talks

Treatment: Favorable, neutral and unfavorable

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1 shows data about the coverage of news under three different subject categories. As can be seen in all the four news papers, the Naxlite related stories ranked first in terms of frequency of coverage. Legal issues of human rights and human rights organizations categories received the least coverage in terms of frequency of news items.

Table 2 shows the impact of story in the news more often determined the photograph than the story itself. For this reason, readers often have their first impression on the news story by looking at the photograph on the page. Thus in the present story, the content of photograph was analyzed to ascertain, how the news paper had covered the human right issues. When the Telugu daily, Eenadu published 5 photos of human rights organization on front page, The Hindu published 12 photographs in inside pages. The Indian Express has given less photos on Naxalites related human rights issues.

Table 1 : Human rights issue of Naxalites in the sample dailies: Percentage wise analysis

Subject categories	**Dailies**							
	The Hindu		**The New Indian Express**		**Eenadu**		**Vartha**	
	fr(%)	sp(%)	fr(%)	sp(%)	fr(%)	sp(%)	fr(%)	sp(%)
Legal issues of Human Rights	8 (0.93)	211.05 (1.1)	2 (0.3)	74.84 (0.5)	11 (0.8)	137.16 (0.4)	5 (0.4)	101.4 (0.03)
Human Rights Organizations	31 (3.6)	532.35 (2.8)	22 (2.0)	278.32 (2.0)	37 (2.7)	474.66 (1.4)	42 (3.0)	728.0 (0.20)
Maoistrelated other Stories	821 (95.46)	18561.69 (96.1)	726 (96.8)	13128.08 (96.8)	1345 (96.48)	32526.90 (98.15)	1336 (96.6)	35199.84 (99.9)
N=	860 (100.0)	19305.09 (100.0)	750 (100.0)	13484.24 (100.0)	1394 (100.0)	33138.72 (100.0)	1383 (100.0)	35234.68 (100.0)

Note: fr=frequency, sp=space in column Cent meters (CCM)

Table 2: Photos in the sample dailies: Percentage wise analysis

Categories	**Dailies**							
	The Hindu		**The New Indian Express**		**Eenadu**		**Vaartha**	
	Front	Inside	Front	Inside	Front	Inside	Front	Inside
	fr	fr	fr	fr	fr	fr	Fr	f r
Photos of legal issues of Human rights	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	-
Photos of Human rights organizations	1	12	1	1	5	4	4	8
Maoists related other photos	49	170	82	119	173	518	365	524
Total	50	183	85	120	478	522	370	522
Grand total	233		205		1000		832	

The front page in a news paper is the most significant news page that displays an important news stories and gives prominence to different newspapers. The Telugu news daily Vaartha has given more coverage on the front page to human rights organizations. The New Indian Express gave very less coverage to human rights subject categories.

Table 3: Front page news stories in dailies: Percentage wise analysis

Categories	**Dailies**							
	The Hindu		**The New Indian Express**		**Eenadu**		**Vaartha**	
	Fr	sp	fr	Sp	fr	sp	fr	sp
Legal issues of Human rights	3	77.49	2	77.84	3	22.66	3	88.4
Human rights organizations	4	108.99	2	75.86	5	162.54	10	253.24
Maoists related other stories	243	5950.35	278	631988	411	14818.16	425	14497.08
N	250	6136.83	282	6405.28	419	15003.36	438	14759.16

Table 4 shows the distribution of frequency and space in inside pages. The two Telugu news dailies Eenad and Vartha have given equal coverage in frequencies and space allocation.

Table 4: Inside page news stories in sample dailies: Percentage wise analysis

Categories	**Dailies**							
	The Hindu		**The New Indian Express**		**Eenadu**		**Vaartha**	
	fr	sp	fr	Sp	fr	Sp	Fr	sp
Legal issues of Human rights	5	133.56	-	-	8	94.5	2	13.0
Human rights organizations	27	423.36	20	202.72	32	312.12	32	474.76
Maoists related other stories	578	12611.34	448	6876.24	935	17813.79	911	19999.46
N	610	13168.26	468	7078.96	975	18135.36	945	20475.52

Table 5 indicates the direction of treatment of the news stories on human rights. The four sample dailies reported more number of unfavorable stories onlegal issues of human rights and Human rights organizations. Over all, it appears that the vaartha news paper gave more favorable coverage to human rights related categories.

Table 5: Direction of treatment of news on human rights related to Naxalites by sample dailies

Categories	Dailies											
	The Hindu			The New Indian Express			Eenadu			Vartha		
	f	uf	ne	f	uf	ne	f	uf	ne	f	uf	ne
Legal issues of Human rights	3	4	1	-	2	-	5	5	1	3	1	1
Human rights organizations	4	25	2	4	18	-	12	22	3	16	23	3
Maoist related other stories	332	440	49	286	386	54	425	593	329	443	687	206
N	339	469	52	290	406	54	442	620	332	462	711	210

f =favorable, uf = unfavorable, ne = neutral

Killing of Journalists

There are a few instances where journalists lost their lives while doing their duty.

Example 1. Chada Sridhar Reddy, reporter of *Udayam* Telugu daily, Mothkuru, Nalgonda district,was shot dead on the intervening of night June 23-24,1993,by Naxalites on ground that he was a police informer.

Example 2. GulamRasool, reporter of Telugu daily Udayam and his friend Vijaya Prasada Rao were killed in early hours of 28th December 1991 at Masjidguda, on the outskirts of the Hyderabad city in Ranga Reddy district. The police described them as unidentified Naxlites. But he was a journalist. He was deeply concerned about social justice and reported many such incidents in newspaper where ever he worked. The Report of the T.L.N.Reddy Commission (1994) which was directed by the Government to probe the murder was summarized observations of different organizations such as 'the Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists' (APUWJ), the finding of 'the Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee' (APCLC) (1994), and 'the Editors Guild of

India' (1994). This incident touches upon various aspects like: The tendency of the state and its police machinery to brand any journalist as a 'Naxalite'or to be having Naxalite leanings, when everhis or her writings were found to be inconvenient to them and also eliminating him/her in encounters.

Recent example 3: Hemachandra Pondey, who worked for several Hindi-language news papers, was killed along with Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad on 2 July, 2010. UNESCO expressed concern over Pandeys' death. It is the only United Nations agency with a mandate to defend freedom of the press and expression. International Federation of Journalist (IFJ) said 'a portfolio of his recent writings shows a well-informed engagement with issues of wide social concern, such as inflation, food security and climate change. Nowhere does it reveal in advocacy of violence'. (The Hindu, 16July, 2010)

Imposing Cases on Journalists

A number of cases have come up before the Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ)regarding arrest and foisting of false cases on journalists on the grounds that reporters had links with Naxalites,presented below are a few cases.

Table 6: Arrests, torture and detention of journalists some cases

S. No	Date	Name and age of journalist	Name of Daily (Telugu)	District in Andhra Pradesh	Incident/ Case
1	February 1990	T. SrinivasGoud (29)	AndhraPrabha	Mahboobnagar	Badly tortured
2	March 1990	N. Ramanaiah (25)	Eenadu	Adilabad	Slapped with TADA
3	July 1990	S. Ramalinga Reddy (30)	Udayam	Medak	Slapped with TADA
4	September 1990	S. Surya Sudarsanam (25)	Andhrabhoomi	Visakapatnam	Sec. 341, 447, 147 & 149 IPC
5	November 1990	Devi SrinivasRao (35)	Eenadu	Guntur	Assaulted and Torture
6	November 1990	Y. Yadagiri (25)	Eenadu	Medak	Sec.153a & 506 IPC
7	January 1991	ChatlaMurali Krishna (24)	Eenadu	Karimnagar	Badly Tortured
8	May 1991	T. sanjeevkumar (22)	Eenadu	Mahboobnagar	Sec. 302 IPC

Special laws are increasingly being enacted in the name of security, like the central law called the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) 2004 (which was replaced POTA that had earlier replaced TADA).State laws like the Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, the various Goonda Acts and the National Security Acts are used indiscriminately. (See table. 6)

Vigilante Groups (Private Mafia Gangs)

For suppressing the revolutionary movements in Andhra Pradesh, for murdering hundreds of revolutionaries along with slapping acts on them, the governments whichever in power at that time (Congress and TDP) used the services of surrendered Naxlites and private elements. Government has gave financial support as well as weapons to terrorize people, leaders of peoples' organizations and civil liberties', to kill the family members of the revolutionaries. This is all done to suppress the voice against the government and ultimately demolished the democratic human rights. These private gangs continued their murderous activities under the direct supervision of the police officers, (Ramakrishna, 2004). The links between political leaders, Police officers, and vigilante groups is an open secret. The links of police and the government with Kathula Sammaiah, Sammi Reddy, Jadala Nagaraju, Nayam and other gangs including money transactions came out in the press.

Ex. "Kathula Sammaiah dies in Colombo hospital.

DGP denies police nexus with ex- Naxals"

(*The Hindu*, 17- 4-2001)

Kathula Sammaiah's death in the year 2001 came in a plane accident at Colombo while he was on business trip. It is widely believed and reported in the press that at least to senior police officers were hand in – glow with Sammaiah. The private mafia gangs are continuing various names such as 'Green Tigers', '*KranthiSena*', '*Tirumala Tigers*' and '*Narsa Cobra*' etc.(see table 7)

Discussion and Conclusion

An unnecessary antagonism was created between people and police it has become a habit for the government to harass the agitators with police cases instead of searching for political solutions to peoples movement. Police had history of fire on people's agitations at Basheer Bhagh, Chevella, Mudigubba and Sompeta in the state. Police cases are registered whatever reason for any agitation at any place. They agitate for common cause such as minimum procurement prices, against adulterated pesticides or seeds, nonpayment of scholarships, against atrocities, against malpractices, for increase in salaries, for drought relief. All the cases imposed on agitators are baseless and false and

Table 7: Attacks on Civil Liberties and Cultural Activists

No	Date	Name	Details	Place	Done by
1	12 January 1985	GopiRajanna	Young Lawyer of Jagtial and activist of Karimnagar Unit of APCLC	Murdered at JagitialKarimnagar district	BJP activists in collusion with the police
2	3 September 1985	Dr. A. Ramanadham	Doctor and Senior Office bearer of APCLC	Shot dead at his clinic Warangal	Mufti police
3	7 November 1986	Japalakshman Reddy	Senior Office bearer of APCLC	-	Police
4	31 August 1989	Dr. Balagopal	General Secretary, APCLC	Abducted at Karimnagar	PrajaBandu
5	7 December 1991	Narraprabhakar Reddy	Lawyer, Convener Warangal District Unit APCLC and Secretary Warangal Bar Association	Killed at his house, Warangal	Police
6	6 April1997	Gaddar	Revolutionary Singer & Cultural activist	Opened fire at Hyderabad	Green Tigers
7	23 November 2000	T. Purushotham	Joint Secretary, APCLC	Hacked to death, Madhurapur Colony Dilsukhnagar,Saroornagar PS, Huderabad	Unknown persons

8	18 February 2001	Md. Azam Ali	General Secretary, Nalgonda district unit APCLC	Hacked to death at Nalgonda	Unknown persons
9	6 November 2003	Dr. G. Lakshman	President APCLC	Kidnapped at Tarnak, Hyderbad and tortured brutally and released	Tirumala Tigers (Nayeemuddin gang)
10	11 December 2003	Bichcha Reddy	Human Rights activists, APCLC, Mahabubnagar	Fatal accident at Mahabubnagar	-
11	24 August 2005	K. Kanaka Chari	Teacher and Rights activists, Executive committee Member Patriotic and Democratic Movement (PDM)	Abducted and hacked Narsa Cobras to death	Narsa Cobras
12	10September 2005	Mannem Prasad	District President, Struggle committee for Annihilation of caste	Murdered at singarayaKonda, prakasam district	Nallamala black Cobras

only aimed at harassing the agitators. The story of every dangerous schism in India today -state vs. people, urban vs. rural, unbridled development vs. human need, blind law vs natural justice. It is the story of an India unraveling at the seams. The two news stories related to arrests of Dr. BinayakSen and Prof SaiBaba was the best examples.

Example 1. Dr. Binayak Sen Pediatric doctor by profession, and human rights activist who highlighted police and Maoist atrocities in the running battle between Indian security forces and guerrilla army of the CPI (Maoist). Dr. Sen was worked for more than 30 years with the tribal poor in Chhattisgarh, battling malnutrition, Tuberculosis, and the lethal Falciparum Malaria strain rampant in the area.

Example 2

DU Prof. Saibaba held for 'Maoists links.'

(The Hindu, 10 May, 2014)

Prof. G. N. Saibaba was arrested by Maharastra police, for his alleged links with Naxalite leaders. He has been a vocal and important critic of the Indian states policies with regard to its paramilitary action in Central and Eastern tribal areas, commonly known as 'Operation Green hunt.' Saibaba teaches English at Ram Lal Anand College in Delhi University, and has been at the fore front of various struggles inside the university and as well as outside. He is a member of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF) and is an out spoken critic of central and state policies on land acquisition and handing over forest land to Multi National Companies (MNC's).

In Chhattisgarh, this manifested itself harmfully in 2005 as the government-sponsored counter–revolution. The now in famous 'SalwaJudum', which pitted villager against villager and triggered a bloody civil war? 644 Villages have been forcibly evacuated by the government, their residents forced in to sub – human camps. Smoke out the support is the state's war cry. Civil right activists tell you the states real quarry is not even the Maoists, but the iron – rich soil; ready to be handed to private corporations, (Shoma Chaudhury – 2008). Indeed, the exploitation of mineral resources in the Adivasi belt has acquired a centrality in the battle for control of these areas. In a chilling document titled 'Tasks ahead'(12 June, 2009) the CPI Maoist polite bureau says " the people should be educated as to how the entire region is being handed over to the comprador big business houses like the Tata's in Lohandigudaetc, the conspiracy – should be exposed and a broad –based movement built against displacement"

Findings

1. The press both the English and Telugu newspapers have given less coverage to human rights of the revolutionary activists. The study shows that press has ignored the motto of social transformation through the Naxalite movement.
2. The press has failed to understand the objectives, socio-economic significance, the scope and limitations of the Naxalite movement in the human rights angle.
3. The corporate press adopts methods to block out or censor news and views favorable to the left wing parties.
4. Even if they are given by force of circumstances, their views are mostly projected in a manipulated manner by not giving prominence in terms of content, space and place in the news papers.
5. Where the news related to massive protests by people, organized by the extremist groups, against the capitalist and monopolist polices of the successive government are totally barred by the newspapers.
6. Most of the time, the press supported and promoted the ideology of the state rather than human rights of people.

Conclusion

Over all, the study concludes that the coverage of mainstream news paperson human rights of Naxalight movement is negligible. In the present study, it was observed that no sampled news paper had written any editorial or publishedan article on op-ed page,on Naxalite movement in human rights violation angle. Press has ignored to look the Naxalite movement as a social problem. When the state continues to portrait the Naxalite movement as it is a law and order problem, social workers view it as a problem of backwardness and poverty. Real problem of Naxalism israther democratic rights to come out of deeply rooted poverty. Naxalite movement is result of pestering feelings of people who are facing social problems such as unemployment, rising debts and suicides, growing bankruptcies of business, imperialist policy and devastation, state sponsored terror, murderous gangs and rising inequalities. Since the media is playing the role of directing the society, the national and local press should focus on ground realities of the movement. Unless the responsible media create a platform for intellectual discourse on the crucial issues, the problems of common people will be remains unresolved,consequently the movement to fight against their problems has to be continued.

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Chapter 3

Media in Protecting the Human Rights: Coverage of Cases in newspapers

Dr. K. V. Ravi Kumar

> *"Press freedom is a cornerstone of human rights. It holds governments responsible for their acts, and serves a warning to all that impunity is an illusion."*
>
> —**Kofi Annan**, *Former UN Secretary General*

Abstract

The extent of various human rights violations across the entire world in general and in our country in specific is mind boggling, such as crimes against humanity which includes genocide, deliberate starvation, torture, slavery, sexual assaults, enforced sterilization entrenched discrimination against women, mass expulsions, aggression against civilians, etc., All the human rights violations have to be wiped-out with the assistance of human rights organizations and the media. The media as the watchdog of the society can play an effective role in protecting the human rights. The need of the hour is to create awareness about the human rights through media. If no awareness is created about it, the enforcement of human rights through legal machinery and all our laws enacted will remain only on paper. In strict sense to speak that even though, many of us educated, may not know what our actual rights are. Therefore, it is not enough not only to know the rights but also to enforce the rights and to ensure that none of our rights are infringed. There are blatant human rights violations are going on, in different States, which are reported in different newspapers and also on new media. These reports are taken as cognizance by the National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi, as suomoto and enquired into alleged *allegations. Hence, in this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the role of media in creating awareness of human rights among general public and to protect the human rights violations around the world.*

Introduction

Media should place an important and ethical role at all levels and in all parts of our country and around the world. It is relevant to mention that Journalists should set their Lakshmana Rekha while reporting the violations of human rights, and their aim should be to report and not to sensationalize. Since media are the ears and eyes of any democratic society, their existence becomes detrimental to the sustenance of all democratic societies. In our country, media especially newspapers has played an important role in educating and informing citizens of their rights, as well as the violation of human rights. Media has largely become mass information rather than mass communication. The media having been played an effective role as a promoter of human rights in view of their coverage of human rights abuses.

What are Human Rights?

Human right is a birth right. Everyone is born with the human rights regardless of who he is, and to which community he belongs. Everyone has a right to be protected by the State and the people. Human rights are inherent and integral to every human being. Human rights are those minimal rights which every individual must have against the State or public authority by virtue of his being a member of the human family, irrespective of any other consideration. Human rights are indivisible, inter-dependent and inter-related having definite linkage with human development. Human rights are essential for the development of human personality and for human progress. These are the rights that all human beings everywhere should have equally and in equal measure by virtue of their humanity irrespective of sex, race, status, social class, natural origin etc. Because of their immense significance to human beings, these human rights are referred to as natural rights, basic rights, fundamental rights, etc. It is pertinent to mention that the rights of man have been the concern of all civilizations since time immemorial.

Historical Perspectives of Human Rights

It may be fairly said that the conception of human rights begins with its western origin with a plethora of documents, declarations, but the events of first and second world wars led the international community in expressing their concern for the promotion of human rights universally. It is important to note that the beginning of the Charter of United Nations marks the formal recognition that the subject of human rights is a matter of international concern. A close examination of the provisions of United Nation Charter would clearly bring out the aims of founding fathers in the promotion and advancement of fundamental human freedoms through international organization. At the international level, International Bill of Human Rights (IBHR) constitutes Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, (UDHR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, (ICCPR) and its Optional Protocol, and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 (ICESCR), and its Optional Protocol.

Despite the above, many instruments dealing basically with all aspects of human endeavor have since been formulated. Human Rights Committee has been established under the covenant on Social and Political Rights; a Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has been set up under the covenant on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination; a committee on the elimination of discrimination against women has been provided under the covenant on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and a committee against Torture has also been set up. These Committees were set up to ensure implementation of various covenants with the sole aim of protecting and preserving Human Rights which inhere in every human being. While the concept of human rights has, in the last fifty years taken deep roots all over the world, there has also been a growing consciousness amongst citizens all over the world against violation of human rights. Strong national and international movements against violation of human rights have emerged.

Role of Media in protecting the Human Rights

The media such as newspapers, television, has played a salutary role in protecting the human rights. There are number of blatant and grievous systemic human rights violations happening around the world. The media and Non-Governmental Organizations being the antennas of society in highlighting the violations of human rights and bringing them to the notice of the National Human Rights Commission. The Commission has been able to take suo motu action against the cases of human rights violations. Justice Balakrishnan also appealed to media that before reporting the cases relating to human rights verify the facts related to it in a right manner, which will help the Commission to perform its role positively. He opined that the Commission is a recommendatory body and the Government could respect its recommendations. Role of media in safeguarding and promoting human rights is also mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, one of the important functions of National Human Rights Commission is to inquire suo motu or on a petition presented to it by a victim or any person on his behalf, into complaint of violation of human rights or abetment thereof. It is laudable to mention that the Commission has taken cognizance of press reports in several cases and initiated suomoto proceedings.

Case 1 Bijbehara: Interestingly the first case taken by the Commission immediately after its establishment related to Brijbehara incident i.e. unprovoked firing by the BSF personnel on unarmed civilians in Bijbehara Jammu & Kashmir. This suomotu action purely based on press information.

Case 2 School Kids: The National Human Rights Commission, hereinafter referred to as Commission, has taken cognizance of a press report published in Hindustan Times captioned as 'Kids Thrashed for insect infected school meal'. The two students of a school of class-VI of Schedule Castes community at MithaniMilki village of Vaishali district near Patna, were allegedly thrashed by their headmaster till they fainted for refusing to eat a mid-day meal of khichdi in which they found insects. When the students refused to eat them the headmaster caned them mercilessly. The Commission vide its proceedings dated 16.07.2012 issued notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar and the District Magistrate, Vaishali to submit a report of the matter within four weeks. At the end, the District Magistrate, Vaishali, Bihar, ordered for the payment of interim monetary relief to the victim students of Schedule Castes Community under the provision of Rule 12 (4) of SC/ST (PA) Rules 1995.

Case 3 Night staff in emergency ward: The Commission has taken cognizance of a news report captioned, "Night staff found missing from emergency wards in hospitals" appeared in Chandigarh 'Tribune' forwarded by Avinash Rai Khanna, Member of Parliament, and All India In-charge Human Rights Cell, BJP vide hisletter dated 07.02.2013. It is reported that there were more security guards than medical staff present at the emergency ward between 1.15 a.m. to 2.30 a.m. All the officials and nurses in the emergency ward were sleeping, as they were free of the duties in the ward. The emergency medical officer is reported to have misbehaved with the attendant of a patient who knocked at his closed door at 12.45 a.m. Nobody was present at the labs between 1.45 a.m. to 2.30 a.m. to conduct emergency tests of accident victims or other emergency cases. The Commission vide its proceedings had issued an Order and directed as 'The above pathetic conditions in the government hospitals are deplorable and if immediate remedial steps are not taken, the same may lead to loss of precious lives of human beings. 'Right to Health' being an important human right,the Commission deems its duty to intervene in the matter. Issued notice to the Administrator, Union Territory of Chandigarh called for a report within a period of four weeks'. This case is pending before the National Human Rights Commission for awaiting reports.

Case 4 Kidnapped girl: The Commission has taken cognizance of a news report from an online source which titled as "Kidnapped girl says Ahmed nagar police hit her" that appeared at www.indianexpress.com. forwarded by ShriGlojer, P.O. Box 8476, I.C.Colony, Borivali West, Mumbai vide his e-mail complaint dated 17.1.2013. He requested appropriate actionin the matter. The press report alleges that a girl, aged 18 years was kidnapped by four unidentified personsincluding a woman from Ahmednagar on January 3, 2013 when her fiancé had gone to the washroom. Shewas allegedly dumped at a prostitution den in Dhule and beaten by brothel-keepers, and she was rescued fromthe brothel on January 5, 2013. It is further alleged that the Ahmednagar Police not only refused to registerher complaint but a senior police officer, namely, Sanjay Barkund hit her and her fiance with a belt claimingthat they were trying to register a fake case. The Commission vide proceeding dated 14.02.2013 issued notice to the Director General of Police, Maharashtra and Superintendent of Police, Ahmednagar to submit a report in the matter within four weeks. They are also directed to inform the Commission as to why the FIR was not registered immediately after rescuing the victim on January 5, 2013. Another instance has been reported in ABP Ananda, a television news channel that 11 tribal minor girls were sexually assaulted by a school teacher in Chattisgarh, on 7-1-2013. The Commission has taken cognizance on the basis of broadcasting and issued notice vide its proceedings seeking a report from the State of Chattisgarh, and the matter is for consideration under the Commission.

Case 5 Police highhandedness: There is a news clipping in the newspaper 'Amar Ujala' in Uttar Pradesh State, that the police personnel have used abusive language against vegetable vendor, as she refused to pay Hafta (illegal payment of money) and also beaten a neighboring vendor. The victim was admitted in District hospital and discharged after treatment. Action was not taken up by the guilty police personnel. The National Human Rights Commission has taken a serious view on high handedness by the police who are the public servants obligated to protect the life and property of the citizens.

Role of Press in Promotion of Human Rights

The newspapers have played an effective role in promoting the human rights abuses and creating awareness among the public in relation to human rights. It would start long before independence as a social reform. In 1823, Raja Ram Mohan Roy brought out weeklies in various languages to campaign against caste discrimination, sati, and widow remarriage. A century late Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our Nation in the service of human rights, h focused on women's rights, basic education, rights of prisoners, communit health, rural employment and other development objectives which later o adopted by the United Nations. In the year 1933, he brought out the first issu of Harijan, and highlighted the issue of untouchable as a serious invasion o private rights which indicates the temper of times. It is to be noted that due t the largely sustained campaign at public meeting and also in print media, th untouchability was abolished and its practice was forbidden in the year 195 under Article 17 of the Constitution of India.

It is pertinent to mention that one of the biggest contributions of the pres in recent years is to make the right to information as a national issue. Th freedom of information, the right to know is crucial in making all other huma rights effective and providing an important safeguard for the enjoyment of a other rights. The campaign for right to information began few years ago wit villagers of Rajasthan demanding access to official files containing the detail of money disbursed for local development works. They knew that much of th money was misappropriated, but it could not prove without access to offici files. The issue was taken up by the Print media especially local newspaper the campaign spread to many parts of the country. Even at the time of writin in the newspapers four States have passed their own right of informatio legislation and the Central Government has passed the Right to Informatio Act, in 2005.

Role of National Human Rights Commission

For better protection of human rights in India, the National Human Righ Commission had constituted under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 199 and it is only institution to protect and promote human rights at the Nationa level. Awareness is key to the promotion of human rights. One of the mo important functions of the Commission is to undertake and promote researc in the field of human rights, and also to spread human rights literacy amon various section of society and to promote awareness of the safeguards availab for the protection of human rights through publications, the media, semina and other available means.

Conclusion

The concern for human rights could never have become a living realit without the active involvement of media in the human rights movemen both at national and international level. Media plays an effective role in ou large democracy in moulding public opinion. As a tool for the promotion an protection of human rights, a free mass media can greatly facilitate the building of a culture of human rights by exposing rights violations and also educating the people regarding the steps to be taken to obtain justice. Therefore, with the help of mass media, it is easy to protect the human rights of the citizens. The importance of the attention given to human rights by the media is noteworthy because their coverage highlights the level of abuses occurring throughout the world. Mass media would serve important functions such as teaching large number of people and also helpful in the spread of human rights education. The Mass Media i.e. the press such as newspapers and electronic media like radio, television, internet etc., highlight the need for the protection of human rights. They publish news, and various articles regarding violation of human rights. It creates awareness among the different sections of the population regarding their rights. They draw the attention of the government to various human rights abuses and in turn have to take an action against the violators. The power of the media in enhancing the promotion of human rights through the nurture of democracy which is considered as a sine qua non for the respect of human rights.

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Chapter 4

Representation of Human Rights in Media: An Analysis

Ms. C. L. Pramoda

Abstract

Human rights are fundamental freedoms to which all people are entitled. They are about being treated with dignity and respect. They are especially important to vulnerable or less powerful sections of the society - children, women, dalits,prisoners of war, mentally and physically disabled people to name a few. This article examines the changes that have taken place in the way the human rights issues are addressed in newsrooms, how they are represented in media. The paper also to some extent, discusses the constraints journalists' face, the effects of changes in the reporting process, in technology, concentration of media ownership, and how the values of journalists and editors influence their priorities and the need to be sensitive in reporting rights issues.

Key words: ethics, technology,newsroom, representation of Human Rights

Introduction

Human rights are historically formulated in response to concrete experiences with human suffering. Notable of these include revulsion against fascist atrocities during World War II, which played a catalytic role in expanding the scope and domain of human rights to be elaborated and enshrined in binding international agreements. In addition, they traditionally concern the relationship between state and individual, thus protecting the individual against the arbitrary use of power by the state. The "horizontal effect," however, is part of this relationship, implying that state obligations include a positive obligation to protect a private party against another private party by legislation and/or preventive measures or by investigating violations. The UN-based human rights system is supplemented by regional human rights mechanisms which vary widely in constitution and effectiveness.

The institutionalization of international human rights standards has constituted one of the major normative shifts in world politics since World War II. In December 1948, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by a vote of 48 to 0, with eight abstentions. Later referred to by the then UN Secretary-General U. Thant as the "Magna Carta of Mankind," the UDHR comprised thirty articles dealing with two broad categories of human rights: civil and political rights; and economic, social and cultural rights. The General Assembly subsequently decided that the two categories would be detailed in separate treaty instruments – the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both agreed upon by the General Assembly in December 1966. Together, the UDHR, ICCPR, and ICESCR constitute the International Bill of Human Rights, which is the overarching framework for global human rights today. Civil and political rights[1] are often referred to as first-generation rights because they were recognized at the national level in a number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century constitutions, whereas economic, social and cultural rights[2] were generally developed in national constitutions and international instruments in the post-World War II era. As such, the former are more deeply embedded in multiple legal systems and traditions. Moreover political and civil rights have often been described as "negative" rights in that they proscribe state interference with individual freedoms, whereas economic social, and cultural rights have been described as "positive" rights that require states to create the conditions in which individuals and collectivities can enjoy a certain quality of life, or to provide certain goods or services to that end.

The American Commission on Human Rights (1978), The African Charter of Human Rights and Peoples' Rights (1981), and the European Convention on Human Rights (1953), contain an expansive menu of rights not only to individuals but also to collectivities. In contrast, Asia still lacks a regional human rights regime, and, given the cultural and political diversity of India China, and Japan, among others in the region, this is not likely to happen any time soon. Finally, complementing the international and regional regimes and associated organizations are a variety of national mechanisms. These include national human rightsinstitutions (NHRIs), which increasingly interact and cooperate on promoting human rights complianceand national capacity building. The NHRIs operate under a mandate established by the UN Paris Principles that were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993.

What are Human Rights?

"Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible." *-Definition of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*3. Human rights are a set of norms, or standards of behavior, that are intended to protect us so that we are able to live full lives, free from fear and abuse. They are rights that belong to all people, just by virtue of being human.

The international community, including India, have all agreed on what these rights are and what they mean. Human rights include, for example, the right to life, which includes the right to live with dignity, the right to equal treatment and not to be discriminated against, freedom from torture, freedom from forced labour, freedom from wrongful arrest, theright to a fair trial, freedom of information,thought, conscience, religion, the right to privacy, right to free speech and expression, freedom to associate with others and to take part in government, public and community affairs, right to food, housing, health, a clean environment, education, work, equal pay for equal work, strike and the right to preserve one's culture and way of life.

Although the term "human rights" first became widely used in the 17th century in Europe, the rights themselves have their roots in ancient times. Some of the earliest written records are in the texts of the world's major religions — the Muslim Quran, the Christian Bible, the Jewish Torah, the Hindu Vedas. They are also to be found in the essays of the ancient Greek, Arab and Chinese philosophers and the laws of Rome. The language of human rights in politics came into use later, in documents like the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration on the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789), and the US Constitution and Bill of Rights (1791), which all speak of human rights. But these were not universal laws. They were national laws, and reflected the politics, cultures and values of their nations at those times. They discriminated against women, against certain religious and ethnic groups, and accepted slavery. The UDHR was the first international recognition that human rights and fundamental freedoms apply to everyone, everywhere. Every year, 10 December is celebrated as the International Human Rights Day, across the world.

Human Rights: India

The formulation of the human as a symbol of its own, representing principles greater than itself namely freedom, dignity, spirit and intellect rather than a material reality, is a unique understanding of the being and one that has been recognized as emerging at a particular time and space: the European Enlightenment. Human rights empower people under particularly difficult circumstances. The awareness about human rights is important to live life as a citizen in a democratic set up. This is particularly, true for a country like India in which poverty, social disadvantage and discrimination are present in many sections. Living life with dignity demands that human rights of everybody are maintained. The traditional societies have many disparities, which come in the way of ensuring human rights to different groups and communities. India as a member of the United Nations, has signed and ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). A number of fundamental rights guaranteed to the individuals in Part III of the Indian Constitution are similar to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In 1993, India created its first human rights commission, under the Protection of Human Rights Act - the National Human Rights Commission [NHRC]. Fifteen states4 have also set up their own human rights commissions to deal with violations from within their states. The National Commission is responsible for seeing that everyone, whoever they are, wherever they are living in the country and whatever they are doing, are able to enjoy and exercise their human rights. State commissions play the same role in their own states. The Chairperson and members of a commission have the responsibility to ensure that those who violate human rights are made accountable for their actions and do not escape justice. Apart from pursuing complaints, human rights commissions are also expected to actively contribute towards creating a culture where there is respect and understanding of human rights. Indian government due to the efforts of Human rights organisations and NGOs across the country took positive steps in 2013 by strengthening laws protecting women and children, and, in several important cases, prosecuting state security force personnel for extrajudicial killings. The impact of these developments will depend in large part on effective follow-up by central government authorities.

Under international human rights law, India has a duty to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights5. The duty to respect is essentially a duty of non-interference with existing access to rights. The duty to protect entails an obligation to ensure that third-party, non-state actors, including corporations and other business enterprises, are not interfering with the enjoyment of a particular human right. The duty to fulfill includes the duty to facilitate and in some cases provide human rights. Inherent in these obligations is the duty to provide an effective remedy when human rights violations have taken place. That there are multiple levels of governance—including state and national structures—capable of treating the human rights abuses suffered by various communities, does not lessen the obligations on the national government under international human rights law. Federalism is not an excuse for the non-performance of obligations under international human rights law, and a national government must still respect, protect, and fulfill its human rights obligations.

Structure of Media and Human Rights

The market trend towards concentration of the media industry reflects a wider process of global concentration in the private sector. Significant mergers of newspapers and wire services have taken place in Europe and the United States and recently in India too (Reliance, Birla groups). More unusually, organizations from the traditional 'news' and business news sectors have combined in large multimedia groupings with organisations that specialize in entertainment(films, magazines, music, web, based services) or in technical products that were previously considered separate domains. This restructuring has significant implications for organizations that work in the field of human rights. Those who gain access tot hemin sources of broadcast news can,at a stroke,reach a much larger audience. At the same time, competition for time and access is fierce, and specific professional skills are required to accommodate the institutional culture and technology of the dominant news distributors. Originators of news are less able to dictate the content of news reports they inspire. Similarly, corporate interests may influence policies regarding distribution of politically sensitive news (such as information on human rights). These interests may be hard to discern and are not subject to argument. Often, we think about media as a tool for transmitting information. However, media also has the power to identify, name, and shape issues. This is particularly true when mainstream media is reporting (or choosing not to report) on events that involve marginalized groups like women, disabled people, tribal and dalit communities. To a great extent media works with the minds et that the promotion of human rights, as such, is not necessarily the media's responsibility. Many journalists simply do not know enough about human rights and human rights law, and about the laws of war and humanitarian law. The media have a professional duty to understand what these rights are, in order to be able to describe events and explain them to their audiences.

Traditionally, media in India has been seen as an institution that is eithe marshaled in to serve the state, and in the recent decades the market-state Added to this, is the fact that globalisation has changed the terrain of traditiona media. The structure of the media domain and its institutional characteristi in India has been heavily influenced by state and public policy. There is th tendency to view the media as an ally of the state, which in fact has a coloni history. The development of state owned media also bears a significant imprin of state dominance. Across the region, public broadcasting corporations hav largely tended to lack sufficient autonomy, with funding and control or at leas influence going hand in hand. From appointments to content managemen these bodies function at the behest of the state.

Albeit greater autonomy for the state owned media, the media in genera is perceived to be broadcasting in the service of the state and particularl showcasing and carrying messages of the government of the day rather tha encompassing a more critical view of the public sphere.In the Indian contex the state has been cautious of freeing its control over the airwaves where radi is concerned. While it has auctioned the FM bandwidths to private commerci players for entertainment programming, news remains the prerogative of th state. It is only after long and sustained pressure from the community radi movement that there have been some initiatives towards permitting communit radio stations6. The end of state monopoly over television and the advent o cable television in the 1990s, a direct result of liberalisation, has given rise t an explosion in news and entertainment television across the region. The shee number and diversity of private television channels has no doubt contribute to anexpansion of the media domain.

Control over newsprint once formed the core of a significant polic instrument, mediating the dynamics between the state and the print media i India. It's deregulation across most parts of the country marked a new phas in the nature and development of print media in the early 1990s. Though, th print media makes an irrefutable claim of representing all the people, wit the significant growth of the media landscape and the rapid evolution o information and communications technologies, it brought with it the dange of a convergence of corporate interests and political influence within the medi The state of the Indian media today, especially its unrestricted commercialis and its conspicuous lack of sensitivity towards those at the lower end of the sca of income and wealth, is a cause of serious concern to one and all. The censorshi of the street (enforced by powerful non-state actors) and the censorship of th market (often connected to corporate ownership and control) also shape th nature of media discourse. The post-liberalisation competitive media space has created new spaces and possibilities. It also spawned the rise of television news as a commodity and political theatre, engendering competitive dramatisation that trivialises or marginalises human rights messages. The growth of the electronic media, with the faulty mechanism of television rating points (TRPs) becoming an important factor in the generation of news, views and opinions, has resulted in the emergence of the media "audience", or consumers of news, rather than as a public citizenry who needs to be informed. Television as a site of "political theatre", especially in the form of talk shows, that is compelled to not only generate 24 hour news but also its competitive dramatisation, to attract eyeballs, has often meant the triumph of simplistic and sensational journalism.

Human rights and technology

Technology is a tool that, in itself is neither good nor bad. However, it can be put to positive or harmful use. The changes in technology have consistently generated widespread political, economic and social consequences that were never seen, which the political authorities were not able to control. The formation of concentrated multimedia corporations, combined with the impact of new technology on the production and transmission of information, is profoundly influencing the values of journalists and media organisations. Each invention (print, radio, telegraph, the moving pictures, television and computers) transformed the production or communication of information. "The impact of the electronic media is probably greater today than at any time in history. Rapid and radical technological change is opening the door to information access and exchange on an unprecedented scale, reshaping the way human beings communicate with each other and lead their lives. If well managed, this holds enormous promise for the people of the world -- to improve health, trade, education, governance and ultimately, individual lives."

As American media critic George Gerbner sees it, even as broadcast channels and other avenues of communication multiply, technologies converge and media merge. Cross-media conglomeration decreases competition and creates hurdles for newcomers. This often means that creativity and diversity give way to standardization that, in turn, leads to an increasingly homogenized cultural environment. As a result of the decline of diverse and comprehensive news produced in the public interest, a growing number people across the world have inadequate access to varied sources of information on important aspects of life. Consequently, there is a general drop in public understanding of current affairs, as well as in citizen participation in community life. This situation, in turn, leads to a diminishment of citizens' political authority.

Sometimes, technology, especially in conflict areas, played a key role in exposing atrocities, particularly in areas too remote or dangerous to reach in person. In Kashmir, Northeast India and Chattisgarh, where the dominant media often masks the tensions between elite consensuses based rule of law and countervailing attempts to define national interest and ideas of rights and belonging, activists, use Skype, email, Youtube, and Twitter to disseminate data in an attempt to garner international media attention. In fact, women's rights stories resonated strongly among Human Rights Watch followers online last year. In summary, technology cuts both ways. It can be used to reinforce injustice and unjust power structures but also to promote or protect human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights.

Human rights – Newsroom

The agenda in a newsroom is determined essentially by its reporting and editorial decision, making processes, and by the organization's editorial culture—which in turn is influenced by various external and internal factors. Reporters, news editors, sub-editors, editors, producers and even media owners are involved in deciding what is finally printed or broadcast. This decision-making process can be understood as a type of "mediation." Our pictures of the world are shaped and refined in the way journalists' frame their news stories. They are the most powerful gatekeepers between the organizations and the wider public. There may be fewer decision-makers when it comes to online media, because individuals can post news directly, without consultation. Human rights issues are reported more than they are covered. To a large extent this may be due to the ignorance of human rights standards. The constant competition for space, time, and culture of breaking news are also factors that reduce the time that is available to consider human rights issues professionally and in more depth. The battle for space is a daily struggle fought out within most news rooms. Also, the tyranny of the breaking story and the pressure to deliver ever-more dramatic images and sensational coverage in a highly-competitive news environment militate against more explanatory coverage. It is the 'herd mentality' that often influences news gathering. Online journalism posted by individuals is therefore sometimes referred to as "unmediated." However, even individuals publishing online make their own choices and decisions. According to Ashwin Mahesh and Subramaniam Vincent, editors of a website called India Together, media can play a stronger role if their reporting is premised on citizen participation, and does not regard readers, viewers and listeners as passive consumers.

Code of Ethics

Journalists have to adhere to certain values and codes of practice in a newsroom. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), there are about 400 written codes for journalists, which vary in quality and comprehensiveness. The most important of them are, truth, accuracy, independence, fairness and a commitment to minimize harm. Unfortunately, as the lines between the editor and manager are fading out, it is becoming a major challenge for the journalists to cover issues concerning the marginalized, and to provide alternative narratives, to counter the dominant discourse.The Times of India newspaper's model is a classic example, which proved that, for successful revenue generation, the compact between the elite, the market, and the media is essential, and as a result,the newsroom ethics have taken a back seat. By employing journalists on contract as in major media houses like Star, Network 18,Headlines Today and Eenadu,the possibility of learning in practice the values and sensitivities through working with more experienced colleagues is fast disappearing. The effect can be seen in the form of journalists' having a superficial grasp of the institutional apparatus of human rights. This has also influenced the nature of newsgathering, editing and presentation. The 'social mission' of media is open to diverse interpretations,and the media being vulnerable to larger and more powerful political and business interests;there is little credibility about the human rights stories that are reported. Even if reported, there are exclusions based on gender, class, caste, ethnicity, religion, region- a system of structured inequalities that is often taken for granted. It is essential for journalists to make an attempt to understand how these exclusions operate to create the taken for granted terms of debate, the unspoken and unquestioned premises the 'normal' space from which the media gazes at the world.

Added to this, the hard reality of a journalist's working life is the manipulation of information to suit national interests, or military and strategic objectives, particularly in time of war. As the political response to coverage of the military strike son Afghanistan shows, no reporters – event opcor respondents of the BBC, CNN or other international media are not immune from the political bullying to serve their government's definition of the national interest.. The principle that journalism must place its loyalty to citizens above all, is what locates media in the public trust. Though, many media organizations have time and again digressed greatly from serving this trust, there is a constant expectation on the part of citizens that this principle will be adhered to.

Representation of Human Rights in Media

Any form of representation that is put up in media is a symbolic act of making something visible and the other things invisible or less obvious. The act of representation is embroiled in much more than the production of images; it entails a complex matrix of interactions between the producer of images but also the epistemic and institutional configurations and relationships. In the case of human rights, this matrix is even more complex as it needs to indicate the presence of another institution, discourse, and set of practices the dominant (traditional) representation. Moreover, the dominant media impoverishes the representation of these realities because it is allied to a problematic series of images that are driven by a "war-on-terror" security discourse, rather than one that highlights the increasing volume of human rights advocacy. The mass media are the most important source of information about human rights violations. Neither personal experience nor human rights organizations directly are anywhere near as significant. For most people television, radio and newspapers are their only source of information. The media selects which events and places in the world the audiences have to see; they decide what constitutes news; they filter and frame the issues; they contextualize the problem; they set the political agenda; and they create both a consciousness and a conscience about human rights issues. Given the larger context of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, traditional print and electronic media in India have been instrumental in effecting the shift from a discourse based on ideas of rights and citizenship, to one based on choice and consumers.

In today's world, the mass media are increasingly playing the role once played by family, community, religion and formal education: not only disseminating information and knowledge, but also shaping values and norms, molding attitudes and behaviour, and influencing the very process of living. Therefore, there is a need for the media audiences to realize the importance of the unequal nature of public sphere in which the media is situated. There are exclusions based on gender, class, caste, ethnicity, religion, region- a system of structured inequalities that is often taken for granted. The attempt must be to understand in terms of how these exclusions operate to create the taken for granted terms of debate, the unspoken and unquestioned premises, and the 'normal' space from which the media gazes at the world of conflict. It is necessary to historically locate the ways in which the relationship of the media with the state and the market have changed over a period of time and how it has influenced the aspect of representation. There is no doubt that the market plays an important role in shaping the dominant discourse. The increasing corporatization of the media and its close links with industry and industrial barons deserves special mention. The increasing presence of the state and its control over the media in zones of conflict is also an overarching reality in India. The emergence of a 'hard', security state with political cultures intolerant of dissent has made for a private media, where by and large the publishers are a part of a paradigm of dominant rule.

Media coverage often tends to be devoid of a historical lens and to uncritically invoke dominant, taken for granted imaginaries in framing and narrating events. For instance, in India, there is often little coverage and even less informed analysis about the conflicts in Chhattisgarh, Kashmir or the North East. In the name of larger concerns, which, is "law and order" and "state security," human rights of groups like terrorists, insurgents and naxalites, are not taken into account and those who defend their rights are seen as 'symapthisers' or 'friends' of terrorists. Violence against women is widespread in India and customary law often enshrines discrimination. Due to absolute lack of sensitivity among journalists (both men and women) and the media about issues like domestic violence, treating women and children as 'humans,most of the cases of human rights abuses go unrepresented in the media. The nexus between the dominant media and powerful corporate or political interests and the military or intelligence agencies has also reconfigured the basic tenets of newsgathering and journalism in alarming ways.

In some sections of the media, particularly the broadcast media, the intense competition and the pressure to constantly produce 'breaking news' results in a construction of events as spectacle. This resultsin lackof any analysis or background information, failing to grapple with complexity and raise ofseveral ethical concerns. This influence of 'sound bites' journalism and the constant need for polarisation and political theatre in television journalism to make news and current affairs into 'drama' that will grab the eyeballs and enhance TRPs sets the norms for what constitutes 'news' as well as shapes viewers' expectations of the medium and views of the world around them. As eminent French sociologist, the late Pierre Bourdieu observed in a lecture on television, that competition has only homogenized content across the various media. He talks about the phenomenon of circular information and asks, "If you wonder how the people in charge of giving us information get their own information,it appears that, in general, they get it from other informers."8 Newsgathering then gets reduced to following up on particular stories that are already creating a storm on some other channel or newspaper, and doing this by using almost identical sources. This phenomenon can be explained with an example. The day after the serial blasts of October 30, 2008, which struc Guwahati, Barpeta, Kokraghar and

Bongaigaon, The Economic Times in its news coverage played up th threat to India's security caused by Islamic militant elements from acros the Bangladesh border. It cited an interview given by A.K. Mitra, the earlie chief of the Border Security Force (BSF), on the eve of his retirement. Th paper went on to say: "Throughout last year the BSF had intercepted 80 Bangladeshis trying to illegally cross over to India – the actual infiltration i roughly estimated to be double the number intercepted – the BSF said th figure was almost 10,000 to 12,000 till a few years back. In other words, at leas 24,000 Bangladeshis have been infiltrating every year." On a careful note, if w observe,the figure 807 become 24,000 in the course of a single sentence, wit no evidence to back the final figure. Interestingly, the report goes on to cit MrMitra's answer to a question whether investigative agencies feed the BS with credible information on Bangladeshi infiltration. Mr.Mitra is quoted a having said, "We do not get authentic information from investigating agencie on time. Whatever actionwe have taken so far against militant outfits like Hu and LeT along the border were based on media reports." As for the media, i then uses the data the BSF projects, in the next cycle of circular information!

The media shows a tendency to stick to simplistic categorisations base on 'common sense' and a black and white interpretation of events, leaving ou the shades of grey and the complexities in the processes. This representatio of conflict as a struggle between good and evil, where the state and the rule o law and order are unambiguously represented as right, is found particularl when reporting events from zones of conflict, be it with respect to Kashmi the North East and the Maoist-dominant tribal areas in India. The media ten to veer between over-simplifying or over-contextualising (and thus mystifyin any resistance, challenge or contestation.

Conclusion

Human rights are a search for global ethics that articulate a set of valu about being in the "human condition," and what we can claim by virtue o being in this condition. Human rights also provide a set of obligations we hav to have for our fellow humans in this condition. Within journalism there is serious lack of knowledge of what human rights are. Many journalists—lik many politicians and others working in civil society — are not familiar wit the universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human righ treaties and mechanisms. Often, they do not understand the differenc betwe human rights law and the laws of war. As a result, human rights are often erroneously regarded as relevant only to reporting of conflict. Today's media crisis compels a review of some of the strategic choices made over the last two decades. It should be asked, for instance, if the industry did the right thing for itself and its customers from about the mid-1990s, by tying its commercial success to advertising rather than content. In the process, the journalism function was devalued and its essential tenets and processes forgotten, because advertising – always the greater contributor to revenue – needed not just to be accommodated, but actively pampered.

Formal mechanisms of censorship may be absent, but the competitive pressure for profits, for winning the favour of advertisers by providing an "editorial context" that privileges, celebrities, lifestyles and other matters that contribute little to the quality of the public discourse, remain a powerful source of self-censorship. Human rights are mentioned more often, the language of rights is more frequently used (sometimes even to conceal actions that contravene human rights) and there is a sense that the media increasingly see human rights organizations as a valuable resource in an important area of news gathering. Similarly, the dialogue between the media and human rights organizations is strengthening and reflects a greater seriousness about human rights coverage on the part of many people in the media. These are considerable steps forward. Much more should be done.

Notes

1. Also sometimes called the first generation of human rights.
2. Also sometimes called the second generation of human rights.
3. http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HRhandbooken.pdf
4. In March 2006: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
5. India acceded to the ICESCR on April 10, 1979. UN Treaty Collection, ICESCR, ttp://treaties.un.org
6. CG Swara, a citizen journalism platform in Gondi and Hindi, for the Central Gondwana region in India, uses voice xml technology linking a website to many phone lines.
7. Message from UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the General Conference of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development Colombo, 26 July 2004.
8. On Television and Journalism, Translated from the French by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, Pluto Press, 1998.

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Section II

MEDIA ON DALIT, DISABLED AND CHILDREN

Chapter 5

Media and Human Rights: Cases of Crimes Against Dalit in Andhra Pradesh

Mr. P. Samuel Jonathan

Abstract

The aim of the article is to thrash out the task of media in covering human rights violation against dalit community. The article address three cases of crimes crop up in various parts of Andhra Pradesh. Conclude with pinning hopes on media to be a watchdog on not only public institutions but also on violation of human rights.

Key words: Media, Human rights, Dalit, Caste, *KaramChedu, Chunduru, Tenali*

I believe that despite enormous odds which exist- unflinching, unswerving, fierce intellectual determination, as citizens, to define the real truth of our lives and our societies is a crucial obligation which devolves upon us all. It is fact mandatory. If such a determination is not embodied in our political vision we have no hope of restoring what is nearly lost to us-the dignity of man," Harold Pinter- Noble Prize winning author.

United Nations in the post-2015 development agenda has included media freedom and access to information. Goal no 16 of the draft agenda for sustainable development stated ``to achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law, effective and capable institutions," This includes sub goals to improve public access to information and government data and promote freedom of media, speech, and association.

A free, vibrant and independent media is the cornerstone of liber democracy. Modern societies have been built on institutions and principl celebrating freedom of speech. Indian media has come a long way from i avowed position as a chronicler of events, decisions taken up by governmen and a mouth piece of government policies in the pre-independence days to modern, free and vibrant institutions that has the power to build public opinio An independent media in the country has been able to perform its role as 'watchdog' on powerful institutions in spite of enormous odds stacked again media organisations. Scholars like AmartyaSen have forcefully established th linkages between a free and vibrant media and good governance.

Yet, media continues to be at the receiving end and has to continual beat the odds as it strives to perform its duties. Public institutions, bureaucra still treat the media with suspicion rooted in the British inherited coloni administrative set ups and hold up the vital information. Journalists are treate with contempt and are denied of their right to access information.

The Civic society on the other hand, expects the media to be an age of change, mindfully oblivious to the fact that media has little to perform i functions. In a recent article on "Free media and good governance," in Th Hindu, Readers Editor A.S Panneerselvan has forcefully stated, "The failu of a few in media sector cannot be a rationale for denying its watchdog th ensures good governance and enables institutions to meet their goals an stated objectives."

Media-Human Rights

Along with the stated objectives of free speech, expression, a relentle pursuit of truth and acting as a watchdog on vital public institution, med has a mandate to protect the human rights of citizens and restoring the sens of dignity to human beings. As we have been witnessing in illiberal nations where human rights were being trampled upon by oppressive regimes media continues to perform its duty in dangerous circumstances. The recen sentencing of three journalists of Al-zazeera in West Asia has led to widesprea criticism. Journalists continue to be in the line of fire reporting in conflict area in West Asia, Africa.

In India, media reportage of human rights is a challenging task considerin the mighty power of the state which would try and suppress the facts Sometimes, even the simple task of obtaining an FIR seems to be a difficult on due to the obstinate police department. Nevertheless, the reporter uses all hi persuasive and a rat like cunning skills to cull out information.

The country, home to some of the most ancient civilizations in the world, has been affected by some of the worst social and religious conflicts over the last few decades. When India attained freedom in the year 1947, a new sense of 'hope', 'dream' and 'vision,' encapsulated the policies to build a nation.

But in its march towards its goal, India has to counter new forces of religious fundamentalism. The primordial racial prejudices that have threatened to tear the social fabric continue to rear their ugly head time and again. Communalisation of Indian polity by fundamentalist forces have only added fire to fuel and a potent mix of communal, caste and social prejudices have been steadily indoctrinated in the minds of youngsters by religious fundamentalist forces since late 1980s.

The communal riots in Mumbai, Muzaffarnagar and Hyderabad have been reported extensively. Media has been forced to tread fine line and reporting on these issues objectively is a constant challenge for the Indian media.

Case 1: Karamchedu

The state I work in, Andhra Pradesh, has witnessed some of the bloodiest communal incidents and caste fuelled carnages which been altered political and social dynamics. The upper caste carnage against Dalits at Karamchedu and Tsunduruhave been a shameful blot on the progressive state of Andhra Pradesh.

Karamchedu Incident-1985- A non-descript village near Chirala of Prakasam district, the village witnessed unprecedented violenceunleashed by upper caste land lords against hapless Dalits. Village landlord, Daggubati Chenchuramaiah, was related to former chief minister and Telugu Desam Party leader N. T. Rama Rao.

Dalits and dalit Christians by then, have begun slowly emerging from the dungeons of illiteracy and poverty and began to work as government officers and teachers. The upper castes seemed to be rankled by a new found assertiveness among Dalits and a sense of insecurity began to creep in them.The caste violence at Karamchedu began with the Dalits protesting vehemently against the teasing of their sisters and women at the hands of upper caste people.

> According to independent reports, Venkatesu, a Kamma youth and son of YerramKanna, went to the house of Tirupataiah and Yerukula, and misbehaved with his daughter. Tirupataiah and his wife tried to stop him. Venkatesu assaulted the couple. A few Dalit youth who were watching the Kamma youth's unruly behaviour, intervened and forcibly stopped Venkatesu from teasing Tirupataiah's daughter.

Mean while, NTR's son-in-law and Chenchuramaiah's son Daggub Venkateswara Rao contested for the MLA seat. Chenchuramaia came to Madigapalle and met the elders.

'My son is contesting. You all should vote for him,' he said. The latte said they would have to think about it. On the election day, whe polling was in progress, it was clear Dalits were voting for the Congre Party. The TDP agents obstructed Dalits, pushed them out and trie to shut the booth doors. Dalits resisted. The TDP agents and hooliga clashed with them.

In the evening on the same day, about 300 Kammas surrounde Madigapalle. Undaunted, Madigas faced them. Kammas, taken abac retreated. From then on, Kammas spit venom on the Madigas an waited for any pretext to pick up row with them.

On 16 July 1985, two Kamma youth, PotinaSeenu and Rayineed Prasad, took their buffaloes to the drinking water tank in Madigapall They fed the buffaloes with washings of rice in buckets.

While they were washing the dirty buckets in the tank, Ka Chandraiah, a Dalit boy, objected to it. His courage angered Seen and Prasad. They were about to beat up Chandraiah when Munnan Suvaartha, a Madiga woman, came to the tank to collect water. Sh tried to protect the boy from the attack of Kamma youths. Seenu an Prasad threw hunters at her. She lifted her vessel and warded off th hunters. Suvaartha's lifting of vessel in self-defence became a prete for Kammas, who were itching for a fresh quarrel with Madigas afte the election clash.

They used the trivial occasion for a ghastly attack on Madigas. Madiga woman lifted the vessel to attack Kammas. There was n meaning for our caste domination,' fumed Kammas. But they kne that they alone could not attack Madigas. They mobilised Kammas o seven surrounding villages, swooped on the Madigapalle on July 17t morning. They raided every Dalit's house, drove Madigas into field The blood thirsty Kammas beat Madigas, stabbed them and axed them They raped Dalit women. They became murderers and barbarians an it was no exaggeration. They chased and hunted Madigas for over 7 km The murder and mayhem had no parallel in the Indian subcontinen Duddu Moshe, Duddu Ramesh, Tella Yehoshua, Tella Moshe, Tel Muthaiah and Duddu Abraham were axed to death by Kammas. In fac eight Dalits were killed in the Kammas' attack. Police did not show tw bodies to the victims andsecretly buried them, (Padmarao, 2011).

Case 2: Tsunduru

Tsundur Incident-August, 1991: The killing of 13 dalits by upper-caste men in Chunduru on August 6, 1991 is a crime of monstrous proportions committed by upper-caste men. It is imperative for the pro-dalit forces to study the incident carefully in order to provide an analytical understanding of the genealogy of the Tsundurmassacre.

Two years back then, the National Front Government headed by V.P Singh announced its decision to implement Mandal committee recommendations to implement reservations in educational institutions and government jobs for backward classes. The decision led to wide spread riots by student groups supported by fundamentalist BharatiyaJanata Party. The minority government fell in 1990.

The new found assertiveness among Dalits and Dalit Christians who have been getting into main stream of polity and society was soon becoming an eye sore to forces opposed to their emancipation. Findings by Dalit Media Studies said that by 1991, the village has more than 25 men and women working in various government offices. Geographically, Tsundurvillage is part of the land irrigated by the Krishna canal system, in the Guntur district.

On August 6, when the event took place, Saibaba, circle inspector and five sub-inspectors were in the village. Srinivasa Rao, a dalit sub-inspector who had still not been relieved from Chunduru, was deputed to the water tank on the pretext that an attack on upper-caste school children was taking place there.

Around 11 a m, the police party (without Srinivasa Rao), under the leadership of Saibaba told the

dalit men to leave their houses as they were about to be attacked by the upper castes. Saibaba and his cohorts instructed the men to run west towards the Tunga-bhadra canal, in order to escape.

The dalits did so, and found gangs awaiting them with knives, axes, spears and gunny bags. In the span of an hour, at least six dalits were killed and their bodies mutilated. These were put in the bags, lied to rocks and thrown into the water. Three of the dalits who tried to escape were caught and killed in the surrounding fields. When the women in the dalitwada heard the screams, and approached the police who were still nearby, they were reassured that the sounds were made by cattle which were being chased around the area.

In the emotional storm, some haystacks and a few thatched roofs were set on fire by the enraged processionists. There was probably some looting, but it is difficult to establish this with any veracity. The one aged Reddy farmer who had not fled, died, perhaps in a retaliatory attack. It is interesting to no in passing, that the press, which had spared the reader the gory pictures the murdered dalits, decided to splash thepicture of the Reddy farmer's bo across the front pages. (EPW, 1991).

The media coverage of Tsundur: When the incident took place on Augu 6, 1991, few media publications covered the event. In fact, it was only on th evening of August 6, 1991, that reports of some `fight,' in the village came in

One of my colleagues, BL Narayana, is a senior reporter with an experien of over 30 years in journalism field. He was working for Andhra BhoomiTelu newspaper when the incident took place. He had this to say.

> "A few months before the incident took place, I started to work for th news papers. I was shuttling to Tenali from my native village Duggiral In those days, we used to call up the land telephone of Special Branc police in evenings just to check if any major crime took place.
>
> I called up the SB police in Tenali and one of the constables said th there was a fight in Tsundur on August 6. Very few papers report the incident on the next day. But by the morning of August 7, I becam restless. I could sense something catastrophic had taken place in th village. I called up my colleague who was also a advocate and we dri to the village on our moped.
>
> As we were driving towards the village, we could see the police seali off the village. The cops were everywhere. We were allowed to ent after we had shown the ID cards. We reached the police station whe a large number of policemen were present. We saw piles of mutilat bodies in front of police station and the entire village was simmerin with tension. We spoke to families of victims and took pictures quickly reached to Vijayawada and gave all the reports and pictures my news editor. The next day, the news flashed on the main page wi the pictures of bodies of victims.
>
> For the next 30 days, it had become a daily affair to go to village an report on the incident. I have covered the case, the visits of importa political leaders and since the last 23 years, I have been close following the incident."

Case 3: Bethala Kantha Suneela

My own experience of covering the killing of a Dalit woman, 45-year o Bethala Kanthasuneela, who was pushed under a speeding lorry by a gro of drunken youth harassing her daughter, has showed that the system in o country has little respect for human life. My report published in The Hindu on April 11, "Woman dies in Tenali protecting her daughter from drunken youth", has received reactions from all over the country.

Report in The Hindu (2013, April 11)

> Youths push her on to the road where she comes under the wheels of a lorryA 45-year-old woman paid the price for trying to protect her daughter from a group of youths, who were allegedly drunk, late on Monday night here. The incident occurred when the woman along with her elder daughter came to Gandhi Chowk, a popular shopping centre here, to shop on Monday night. They were returning home when the girl, a B.Tech student, was stopped by a group who had just come out of a bar. Her mother reportedly reacted and slapped one of the boys.

Pushed under lorry

> The enraged youngsters soon began abusing the mother and daughter and in a fit of rage, pushed the mother against a lorry causing her grievous injuries on her head and body. Eyewitnesses told the police that the youths dragged the woman and pushed her on to the road. The woman came under the wheels of a lorry and died hours later in a hospital at Mangalagiri. The woman was identified as Bethala Kantha suneela (45) and she was the wife of Bethala Babu Rao, a teacher working in the Municipal High School at Tenali.
>
> Mr. Babu Rao in a written statement to the police said that two policemen, one of them on a motorcycle on duty at the scene of the crime, did not react even after his daughter raised an alarm. "It was painful that even locals did not come to the rescue of my wife and daughter. I reached the spot within minutes and saw my daughter trying to pull out her mother who fell under the wheels of the lorry," Mr. Babu Rao told The Hindu. When contacted, DSP, Tenali, Tulasi Ram Prasad, denied the charges and said that a lone head constable was present at the police outpost, located about 500 metres away from the scene of the offence. The constable on duty was among the first to reach the spot and called out an ambulance, the DSP said. "It all happened within a minute. The police did not have time to react," he said.
>
> The police said that they had arrested all the seven accused. Superintendent of Police, Guntur Rural, J. Satyanarayana, told The Hindu that they would explore legal options whether to slap charges

according to Nirbhaya Act or not. The police have slapped charges of murder and cases under SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities Act) against the accused.

The incident sparked protests by Dalit associations who alleged that the police were trying to protect the accused. The protests assumed political overtones after YSRC leader Ummareddy Venkateswarulu visited the relatives at the hospital.

The High Court of Andhra Pradesh has taken a suo motto cognizance of the report and ordered for an enquiry. The State Government promptly reacted and arrested all the eight accused. Affirmative action in the form of land for the victim's family, employment to a daughter soon followed.

Report in The Hindu (2013, April 11)

Treats The Hindu report of a woman being pushed under lorry by a gang of drunken youths as PIL The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday suomotu treated as public interest litigation a report published in The Hindu about "barbaric incident" of B. Kantha Suneela being pushed under the lorry while saving her daughter from a gang of drunken youths in Tenali and called for a report from the State. A Division Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice N. V. Ramana and Justice Vilas Afzulpurkar directed the Advocate General to take the notice for the State and file a report in the matter by April 12. Police too has been asked to send a report by Friday. Taking a serious note, the Bench said from the news item, it appears that an attack took place on hapless women walking on the street. Similar incidents were reported in the newspapers in recent times. "No civilised society could tolerate the incident of the nature and if we go by the news item, it is unfortunate to note that neither the police nor the locals came to the rescue of the victims", the Bench said explaining why the report was taken up as PIL. The Bench directed the Member Secretary, AP State Legal Services Authority to inform the District Judge, Guntur and Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority about the incident to take immediate steps to send para legal volunteers to the victim's family to render necessary legal aid. The Bench wanted the Member Secretary to ask the Guntur DLSA to send a detailed report from the police. Meanwhile, the DLSA of Guntur sent three representatives to meet the family members of Kantha Suneela.)

Conclusion

In developing countries like India with its inherent social inequalities, violation of human continues with a disdain for rule of law. The facts liberal principles enshrined in the Constitution of India have not been shown the due regard by the public institutions have only aggravated the problem. Media has a sacred duty to be a watchdog on not only public institutions but also on violation of human rights. I hope that the media would continue to strive for protection of individual liberty and human rights.

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Chapter 6

Media Coverage of Dalit's Participation in Panchayat Raj Institutions: A Case Study in Tamil Nadu

Dr. V. Ratnamala

Abstract

The constitution (73rd Amendment) Act gave more power, authority and functions to the Panchayats. As a result of 73rd amendment, Tamil Nadu enacted Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994 which introduced three tier systems with reservation for SCs and STs proportionate to their population in all three tiers and elections were conducted in 1996. Since 1996, Dalits have been facing more hostility from the dominant castes at Panchayats in Tamil Nadu particularly in the southern districts where caste classes and violations of rights of Dalits are common. The present study is to examine the print media coverage of Dalits participation in PRIs with special reference to the panchayat elections in the Madurai district and the murder of Dalit panchayat presidents in Tirunelveli during 2002 and 204. It also focused the role of mainstream media regarding the Dalits participation in PRIs. The content analysis was used to examine the coverage of Dalits participation in PRIs. The in-depth interviews were conducted with the journalists, editors, politicians and the NGOs to probe the role of media regarding the Dalits participation in PRIs. The findings revealed that the plight of Dalits was not documented in the media similar to the society. The coverage of Dalits was embedded within the context of victims. The dailies failed to probe

the grounds of Dalit's political participation and murders. The mainstrea media is not giving importance to the village level panchayats.

Key words: Dalits, Print Media, Panchayat Raj Institutions

Introduction

New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) asser the need for democratization and development. Democratization mean creating an equitable balance of news flow. Development implies the more ju distribution of communication resources. Communication and cultural polici should ensure that creative artists and various grassroots groups could mak their voices heard through the media. If and only when the grassroots group like Dalits acquire Self-esteem, share of resources, political participatio then there is democracy. The political participation is a significant tool f democratization of their social groups. But they are denied and suppress regarding politics. In Tamil Nadu, for the past 10 years Dalits are not allowe to be in the panchayat chair in the reserved seats. Pappapatti, Keeripatt Nattarmangalam and kottakachiyendal panchayats are reserved panchayats f Dalits. Because of the threatening of caste Hindus in those villages, the person who were elected resigned their post immediately or not even contesting. Th caste Hindus ostracizes the Dalits and they are denied of access to publ places or shops. Here the Dalits are denied of their fundamental rights an also the human rights. It's the duty of the media to contribute to their progres The media should contribute to promoting the just cause of peoples strugglin for freedom and independence and their right to live in peace and equalit This is especially important for all oppressed peoples who while strugglin against colonialism, religious and racial discrimination, are deprived of an opportunity to make their voices heard within their own countries. This pap studied the media coverage of this issue.

Status of Dalits in Panchayat Raj Institutions in Tamil Nadu

The constitution (73rd Amendment) Act gave more power, authori and functions to the Panchayats. As a result of 73rd amendment, Tam Nadu enacted 'Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act 1994' which introduced three ti systems with reservation for SCs and STs proportionate to their populatio in all three tiers and elections were conducted in 1996 (Pal, 2001). Since 199 Dalits have been facing more hostility from the dominant castes at Panchaya in Tamil Nadu particularly in the southern districts where caste classes an violations of Dalits are common. Among the total 22,156 panchayats in Tam Nadu, 12,618 panchayats are reserved for Dalits on rotator basis. From 1996 t 2006, elections were not allowed to be held in four Panchayats in Madurai an

Virudhunagar districts namely *Pappapatti, Keeripatti, Nattarmangalam* and Kottakachiyenthal. (Sumathi & Sudarsen, 2005).

In fact, in 1997, caste-Hindu hostility led to the massacre of six Dalits, including Murugesan, president of the Melavalavu village panchayat in Madurai district (Viswanathan, 2002). Caste-Hindu panchayat presidents who were sympathetic to Dalit causes were also not spared. One such panchayat chief was hacked to death in Coimbarore district (Viswanathan, 2007).

Elected Dalit presidents of villages in several districts of Tamil Nadu are prevented from conducting their roles with dignity. In Tirunelveli district, two Dalit presidents were murdered for exercising their democratic right. Jaggaiyan from Nakkalamuthanpatti village Panchayat and Servaran from Maruthankinaru village Panchayat were murdered on November, 2006 and February, 2007 respectively. A Dalit woman president P. Krishnaveni of Thalaiyuthu panchayat in Tirunelveli, was brutally attacked by a gang in June 2011 (The Hindu, 2011). More than 10 Dalit presidents are facing life threats from the dominant castes.

The present study was intended to:

1. Examine the coverage of Dalits participation in PRIs with special reference to the panchayat elections in the Madurai district and the murder of Dalit panchayat presidents in Tirunelveli.
2. Find out the role of mainstream media regarding the Dalits participation in PRIs.
3. Analyze the language used in sampled newspapers in relation to dalit

Research Methodology

Triangulation design was employed in the study. The content analysis was used to examine the coverage of Dalits participation in PRIs during 2002 and 2004. The in-depth interviews were conducted with the journalists, editors, politicians and the NGOs to probe the role of media regarding the Dalits participation in PRIs.

Case Study 1

The case study on "Panchayat elections" helped understand the coverage of Dalits participation in local body politics particularly at the panchayat level. Here participation refers to the nomination process and contest of Dalit candidates

Method: Content analysis is the primary research method for this study.

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through content analy technique.

Universe and sample: It was chosen to study the content of the Tam dailies. The print medium was remains the permanent distributors information. The Madurai edition was selected since they would give full picture of the media coverage of Dalits participation in Panchayat R Institutions. According to Wimmer & Dominick (2003), most content analy in mass media involves multistage sampling. In the same way, the present stud consists of three stages: sampling of content sources, selection of dates an selection of content.

Sampling stage 1: Selection of newspapers: The Tamil dailies name Dina *Thanthi, Dinamalar* and *Dinamani* were chosen for the study. The are the largest circulated dailies in Tamil Nadu based on the Audit Burea of Circulation. According to January 2004 reports of the Audit Burea of Circulation, Dina Thanthi had a circulation of (10,40,800), *Dinamal* (6,70,400) and Dinamani (3,50,500). Also all the newspapers have their roo in the southern districts. The founder of Dina Thanthi, Si.Pa.Adhithanar wa the son of the soil and he started the newspaper from Madurai. The founder *Dinamalar*, T.V.Ramasubbaiyer belonged to Nagarcoil shifted Dinamalar fro Travancore to Tirunelveli. The initial editors of *Dinamani* T.S.Chockalinga and A.N.Sivaraman were staunch congressmen of Tirunelveli shifted later chennai and joined dinamani.

Sampling Stage 2: Selection of Dates: In many studies, the time peri from which the issues are to be selected is determined by the goal of t project. The goal was to examine the Tamil dailies coverage of Panchayat R Institutions. This case study was chosen to study the participation of Dal in panchayat i.e. local body elections in terms of nomination and contest elections. In this study, the researcher analysed the content published betwe the date of announcement of election and the date of resignation of Da Presidents during the two bye-elections held in April 2002 and Septemb 2004 were selected for the study. In 2002, two months sample from Mar 1 to April 2002 was selected. In 2004, two months sample from August 1 September 2004 was selected.

Sampling Stage 3: Selection of Content: The content regarding t Pappapatti and Keeripatti issues was selected for the study.

Units of Analysis: All the articles, editorials, letters to the edito concerning the event in the three dailies were analyzed.

Categories and variable of the study: Five content categories were developed drawing on those in previous studies. The content analysis identified the content categories and their variables. The content categories were frequency of news, Space, lexical choice, accuracy of reporting, sensitiveness of reporting and neglected issues. The content categories accuracy of reporting, sensitiveness of reporting and neglected issues was developed by the researcher for this case study.

- *Space* – space allotted in col/cm for news and headlines
- *Lexical choice* - Use of a word with positive or negative connotations
- *Accuracy of reporting*- Spell checking of the names of the constituencies
- *Sensitiveness of reporting* – Terminologies used to refer Dalits as Adi dravida, SC and Dalit
- *Neglected issues* – Whether the terms untouchability, PCR act and Panchayat act were included in the news stories.

Data Collection: Data collection for the content analysis was achieved by coding each item within a sample newspaper directly into a Microsoft excel sheet across each of the categories of the content analysis. The direct application of coding into a computer would limit errors in transferring data for analysis.

Data analysis: Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected from the newspapers employing content analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentage distributions, percentages, graphs, was used.

Case study 2

To study the stereotyping of Dalits in Tamil dailies with respect to the murder of Dalit Panchayat leaders, the researcher chose three leading and popular dailies Dinamalar, Dina Thanthi and Dinamani. Depending upon the occurrences of the news stories concerning the issue under study, it was decided to study the content of the sample dailies for a week from the date of the murder of the Presidents.

In-depth interviews: In-depth interviews were also conducted with journalists and Dalit politicians to understand the position of media in the coverage of Dalit issues. The in-depth interviews were conducted to know the views and opinions of them regarding the media coverage. Using a purposive sampling, editors and reporters of the sample newspapers, Dalit politicians were identified and deliberately sought as being able to provide the most comprehensive perspective. Data were gathered from semi-structured face to- face and phone interviews. Respondents were asked the same set of ope ended guiding questions. Each interview lasted between 20 minutes an an hour The objective was to understand the Dalit politicians, newspape reporters and editors point of view about the Tamil dailies coverage of Dal political participation. It used open-ended questions which were prepared b the researcher. The researcher tried to build a rapport with the respondent an the interview was like a conversation.

The purpose of the in-depth interview was three-fold as they provided -

a. data on the roles of editors and reporters in the coverage of Dalit participation in politics
b. the views of the Dalit politicians on the coverage of Dalit politica participation in Tamil newspapers
c. a resource for comparison with the results of the content analysis

Analysis and results: Case study: 1

News Stories

Table 1.1 : News Items published in the sample dailies

Year	Dinamani	Dinamalar	Dinathanthi
2002	35	38	43
2004	15	6	7

Table 1.1 reveals that in the two Tamil dailies - Dinamani and Dinathanth only 50 news items were published pertaining to the two bye-elections held i April 2002 and another bye-election held in September 2004. In Dinamala only 44 news items were published during the study period.

Table 1.2: Space allotted for the coverage of Dalits participation in PRIs in the sample dailies

Year	Dinamani CCM	Dinamalar CCM	Dinathanthi CCM
2002	2311.34	2517.03	3928.02
2004	1210.2	401.33	893.66

Note: CCM=Column cent meter

Table 1.2 shows that the space allotted are also low. In Dinamani, 3521.5 column centimeter space is allotted for this issue. In Dinamalar, 2918.3 column centimeter space and in Dinathanthi, 4821.68 column centimet space is allotted. This reveals how the Tamil newspapers give less importanc to this issue. The number of news published and the space allotted for them is comparatively low.

The usage of lexical choice

Language also plays a major role in media bias. Language may also seen as a political factor in mass media. Language may also be a more subtle form of bias. Use of a word with positive or negative connotations rather than a more neutral synonym can form in the audience's mind a biased picture (Van Dijk, 1988).

The panchayat is the word used in the Indian constitution to refer the local body government. In Tamil, they have translated the word panchayat into Ooratchi. That means the rule of the Oor. Here Oor directly reveals the place where the dominant castes are living. Cheris are the place where the Dalits live. The cheris are ostracized from the Oor. The oppression of the Dalits is materially manifested in the physical isolation of Dalit Cheris (quarters), (Gorringe, 2005).

Table 1.3: Terminology used to refer local body

Year	Terminology	Dinamani	Dinamalar	Dinathanthi
2002	Panchayat	16	113	175
2004		0	22	12
2002	Ooratchi	102	10	40
2004	(Local body)	53	0	17

Table 1.3 shows that Dinamalar & Dinathanthi used the term Panchayat to refer the local body 113 & 175 times respectively in 2002. Dinamani used the term ooratchi 102 times in 2002. For 6 times, in the same story, they have used both panchayat and Ooratchi. 5 times in Dinathanthi and 1 time in Dinamalar, they have confused these words.

Accuracy is the most important ethic followed all over the world. The Press council of India also stresses the need for accuracy in the reporting. There was more confusion in reporting the names of the panchayats. They have reported Kottakachiyenthal in 7 different spellings. They reported Pappapatti in 2 different ways, Keeripatti in 2 different ways and Nattarmangalam in 2 different ways. They did not use a single style in reporting even the name of the Panchayat. Even in reporting a news item, they used one spelling in the headline and another spelling inside the news item. They have made those mistakes for 11 times.

Table 1.4: Errors committed by the dailies while referring the Constituency

Year	Dinamani	Dinamalar	Dinathanthi
2002	8	19	33
2004	6	8	8

Table 1.4 shows the number of errors committed by the dailies whil referring the constituency. All the dailies have committed errors irrespective during the sample period. Also they show less sensitiveness to this issu They don't know even the difference between caste and race. Two times i *Dinamalar,* they reported Dalit as Dalit race.

Table 1.5: Terminology used by the dailies to refer Dalits

Year	Terminology	Dinamani	Dinamalar	Dinathanthi
2002	Dalit	27	13	10
2004		0	7	0
2002	SC	16	11	10
2004		0	1	0
2002	Adidravida	6	0	0
2004		0	0	0

Table 1.5 shows the data of the terminologies used by the dailies to ref Dalits. The dailies don't follow a single style in referring the dalits. They use Dalit, SC, Adidravida in various news items. In Dinamani, they used the ter Dalit for 27 times, SC for 16 times and Adidravida for 6 times in 2002. I Dinamalar & Dinathanthi they used the terms Dalit and SC.

Table 1.6: Repetition of the word "Election" in the sample dailies

Repetition of word Election	Dinamani	Dinamalar	Dinathanthi
2002	104	76	133
2004	40	14	12

Table 1.6 shows that the three dailies continue to report only the electi news. Also it repeatedly used to report the boycott of elections by the villa people, mainly the dominant caste. In *Dinamani,* they have used the wo election for 104 & 40 times in 2002 and 2004 respectively. In *Dinamalar,* th have used the word election for 76 & 14 times in 2002 and 2004 respectively. I *Dinathanthi,* they have used the word election for 133& 12 times in 2002 an 2004 respectively.

Awareness on Legal Protection to Dalits

The sample dailies never speak about the legal rights and protection of Dalits. Untouchability is banned by the Constitution of India. Although untouchability is prohibited in the Indian constitution, it took various new forms now. One of the well-known forms of untouchability was the boycott of election by the dominant castes in the reserved seats and pressurizing the Dalits not to participate in the local body elections. According to Oommen, Untouchability is a system of cumulative deprivation in which Untouchables have low ritual status, miserable economic conditions, and lack of political power (Oommen, 1984). But the sample dailies were not mentioning anything related to untouchability or other legal provisions like Protection of Civil rights Act which safeguard the human rights of Dalits.

Analysis and Results: Case Study 2

The Coverage of murder of Dalit Panchayat Leaders in Tamil dailies

Elected Dalit presidents of villages in several districts of Tamil Nadu are prevented from conducting their roles with dignity. In Tirunelveli district, two Dalit presidents were murdered for exercising their democratic right. Jaggaiyan from Nakkalamuthanpatti village Panchayat and Servaran from Maruthankinaru village Panchayat were murdered on November, 2006 and February, 2007 respectively. Both of them resisted the upper- caste vice president who tried to keep them dummy. At least 10 other Dalit panchayat presidents in Tirunelveli district, all Arunthathiyars, have complained that their lives are under threat from caste-Hindu opponents, who are allegedly resisting Dalit presidents' exercise of power.

The data revealed that this issue is underrepresented in the three Tamil dailies. The murder of Dalit Presidents was followed for only two days. Even that news was covered with the law and order angle only. The news coverage had reproduced the F.I.R. filed by the Police department. It is clearly evident from the reporting of the murder of Maruthankinaru village Dalit President. On the first day of his death, the police spokesman told it a natural death. After the resistance of the village people, the local political parties and NGOs it was reported as murder in F.I.R. on the next day. The coverage of the three dailies is the replica of the police report.

In terms of the space, the placement and the occurrence of the news stories, it revealed that this issue was given less prominence and was not adequately represented. In the coverage Dalit presidents were portrayed as victims. They never tried to point out the finger at the real cause of caste oppression. It was not seen as an assault on democracy. Moreover in the headlines the murdered

Presidents were not identified as Dalit President. They merely portrayed t issue as a normal death. All the three dailies published news stories concernin the murder, the press release of the political parties and the payment o compensation given to the deceased.

The coverage of murder of Dalit Presidents suggests that the thr Tamil dailies give less prominence to this issue. Here the Dalit Presidents a portrayed as victims of violence. The violence of the upper caste is unquestione in the news reports. The Presidents were not identified as Dalits in the new reports. The dailies did not attempt to interpret or discuss the murder of Dal Presidents in detail. This is just ordinary crime news for them.

In-depth interviews

With Ravi Kumar, Dalit Politician: They are not giving due importance t untouchability and caste based discrimination. Media believe that such issu do not have news value. For instance, child marriage is prohibited and is illeg But when there is any occurrence of child marriage, media still gives detaile reports considering that there is news value. Likewise untouchability is legal abolished and the practice of untouchability is a crime. If any one practic it, then it could be reported because atrocities and discrimination of Dal definitely has news value. But newspapers fail to give due importance.

With Moorthi, Editor in charge, Dinamalar: We focus mainly on dai reporting. We have limited time. So we cannot do in-depth analysis of a issue. Weeklies can do that. But we can't. We rely on F.I.R for crime reportin Because it is an authenticate source of information.

With Damodharan, Editor, Dinamani: I agree that there is lack of in-dept reporting regarding the atrocities against Dalits including the murder of Da panchayat presidents in Tirunelveli. There is no analysis, interpretation o follow-up for this issue. As we fear that detailed reporting would lead to a cas conflict. We do not fear any other external forces. We restrict the coverag ourself. But we cover that issue very fairly and take enough measures to get th report published in all the editions of Dinamani. Another reason for absenc of detailed coverage is because other newspapers too do not attempt to gi such coverage.

With Ilamathy, Dalit journalist: When I was in a television channel, was interested in reporting about a Dalit woman Panchayat president wh faced severe discrimination from the upper caste. But I was not permitte to cover that issue since it was mentioned as a Dalit issue. However if the report any other Dalit issue, they would present it with weak elements an irrelevant spokespersons. The journalists never take a Dalit stand. Although the journalists report a conflict between Dalit and other caste, there would be minute discrimination by taking an anti Dalit stand.

Inferences drawn from the study

The findings disclose that the Dalits political participation is given less prominence by giving less space and fewer occurrences. The findings confirm that the news about the Dalits political participation is delimited within the official announcements of elections and political party protests. It confirms that Tamil dailies over rely on official sources. There was a selective omission on issues like PCR act, untouchability, the Panchayat act and the Constitution of India. The analysis reveals that the Tamil dailies didn't report about the following:

- The poll-booth and other meetings are conducted only in the dominant caste area.
- In 2003, 9-member committee sent by the Government did not go to the Dalit area.
- Not even a single member who hinders the election is arrested or punished.
- No legal action is taken against the caste Hindus either as per the provisions of
- SC/ST (PA) Act 1989 or as per the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act 1994.

The data reveals that there is more inaccurate reporting in the Tamil dailies. They do not see this issue as a major news value. They do not give pressure to the government to put an end to this undemocratic action. They just inform about the happenings. But do not ready to take any other steps to solve this problem. Most of the reporting is mainly event based. It lacks in-depth reporting and also follow-up.

The poll-booth and other meetings are conducted only in the dominant caste area. In 2003, 9-member committee sent by the Government did not go to the Dalit area. Not even a single member who hinders the election is arrested or punished. No legal action is taken against the caste Hindus either as per the provisions of SC/ST (PA) Act 1989 or as per he provisions of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act 1994. This willful omission on the part of the officials has emboldened the Caste Hindus to continuously practice untouchability in the name of boycotting the elections (National Public Hearing on Pappapatti, Keeripatti, Nattarmangalam and Kottakachiyenthal Juri Kit, 2005). But it is not reflected in the coverage of Tamil dailies.

According to B.R.Ambedkar the roots of democracy lie not in the form government, parliamentary or otherwise. A democracy is more than a form government. It is primarily a mode of associated living. The roots of democrac are to be searched in the social relationship, in the terms of associated li between the people who form a society. In this issue too, the caste is the maj reason for the problem. The existence of the caste system is a standing denial the existence of those ideals of society and therefore of democracy (Panikk 2000).

The data revealed that Tamil Newspapers did not see this issue as a maj news value. They just inform about the happenings. But in terms of space an frequency, the coverage is minimal. There is no interpretative piece on th issue. By reproducing the official report, the journalists were suppressing th facts. The coverage of Dalits was embedded within the context of victim The dailies failed to probe the grounds of Dalit's political participation an murders. The lack of in-depth reporting led to stereotyping. Thus the dailie misrepresented the rights of Dalits by perpetuating stereotyping.

The interviews with the politicians and the journalists revealed that th media is also having some limitation. To be in the safer side, they are followin F.I.R and the other views are recorded by getting views and opinions fro the people. As there is no competition among the media people, so there not much discussion. The media is also not worried about the panchayat R institutions.

So the media should consider decreasing the oppression of caste syste as a major news values in the reporting. The media too does not escape fro the casteism. In Tamil Nadu, there are only few Dalit journalists (Robin Jeffre 1996). The media reflects only the social and cultural conditions, which preva in the society. So the media should think seriously about this issue.

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Chapter 7

Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Access to Website Information: A Study of Indian University Websites

Dr. P. S. Mathew Martin

Abstract

Websites are today the face of an organization in the virtual world, with a global reach. Human rights advancement requires both unrestricted media and a reachable audience (Clair Apodaca, 2007). Right to higher education is a human right. Universities are organizations in India offering higher education. They use their websites for education and dissemination of information. Accessibility of these websites will be the test of its global reach to its students. The Information and Technology (IT) Act 2000 of India, is silent on the subject of website accessibility for persons with disabilities. However, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) guidelines, which have been ratified by Govt. of India, in 2007 of which Article 9.2 (g) and (h) lay down that, states should facilitate access for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) for education, for new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet. One of the aims of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country and lay special emphasis on upholding the quality of higher education in India. The websites of 137 Central and State Universities with NAAC accreditation were used for the study. The study was undertaken on 3rd December 2013 to analyze the qualities of websites designed by these Universities (in India) both *central as well as state government. The study aimed at evaluating the websit in terms of media tools for information, education, dissemination, accessibilit design and interactive participatory features for students with disabilitie The study showed 24.8 per cent of the websites under study and 57.1 per cen Central Universities offered information vernacular medium. While none o the Central University websites passed Markup validation test, there were State Universities that passed the same test. Only 25.5 per cent of the websites o NAAC accredited Central and State Universities in India passed the cascadin style sheet (CSS) validation and 8.8 per cent mobile phone validation test. Eve though 67.2 per cent of them used videos, images and photographs in websit none of them provided alternative text or audio description. Majority of th websites under study provided downloadable information and participator features, but few of them offered accessibility features, which ensure huma rights in higher education.*

Key words: Human Rights, Higher Education, Universities, Accessibilit Digital Convergence, Websites, Media, Persons with disabilities, Disabilit communication.

Introduction

Since human rights finally entered into global political and diplomati discourses, its Institutionalization was swift. The United Nations adopte the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948; shortly thereafter, in 1966, th International Human Rights Covenants gave legal force to the declaratio There are several core human rights treaties, the most recent being th United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006 A majority of states has joined these treaties (Cole 2005, 2009; Wotipka an Tsutsui 2008; Hathaway 2007. India ratified the same in the year 2007. Website are today the face of an organization, with Global reach. In his study on website Gerry Mcgovern said that 'Website reflects true face of an organization a never before' (Mcgovern, 2006). The Web creates a direct link between th organization and the customer'. Academics have paid close attention to thes developments. Human rights talk in academe is prevalent, and increasingly s over time (Cardenas 2009). Websites are used by Universities in India as a Information and Communication Technology (ICT) medium. Universities ar organizations in India offering higher education. They use their websites fo education & dissemination of information.

'A website is increasingly the place where customers get that vital fir impression' (Gerry Mcgovern, 2006). Accessibility of these websites to studen with disabilities is a human right. Accessibility of the websites is a test

Global reach. All the Universities in India guided and monitored by University Grants Commission (UGC) and have their websites. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is one of the autonomous bodies established by the UGC of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. In the Year 2010, the Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment made a provision of Rs.20 lakh for adopting the website accessible to PWDs under Scheme of Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) and requested all Central/State Universities recognized by UGC to provide self-contained proposals. The articles 8, 9 and 21 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) 2006 guidelines deal with awareness, accessibility and access to information. The article 9.2 (g) & (h) of UNCRPD, (to which India is signatory since 1st October 2007), specially lay down that states should facilitate access to new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet for PWDs.

Human rights to information in the digital world cannot be denied, due to disability. 'Digital inclusion tends to be solely associated with technical accessibility issues' (Steyaert, 2005). 'A particular focus of attention has been the inaccessibility of virtual learning environments for disabled students' (Newland, Pavey, and Boyd, 2004). In a review of accessibility issues in higher education, Seale (2006) noted that, although disabled students may have access to computers and the Internet, they may not necessarily have access to accessible online learning resources and activities. Seale concluded that in this sense, disabled students may still be 'have-nots', and experience what Burgstahler (2002) described as the 'second digital divide'. Seale and others such as Draffan and Rainger (2006) have attempted to expand the context within which accessibility is understood to include not just technical issues, but also pedagogical and institutional factors. Such moves have helped to expand our conceptualization of accessibility, but on their own they only partially contribute to the improved conceptualization and understanding of digital inclusion.

The internet facilitates the creation of websites. According to Karandikar M (2011), 'in India the Internet is arguably the most convergent medium of communication today'. The applications developed for the internet facilitate communication through text, audio, video, websites, online discussion forums, blogs, guest books, community sites, web-casting, pod-casting, banner advertisements, offer online services and also enable commercial transactions. Content-wise, features like these would make websites a convergent medium enabling the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in India to interact and communicate with the prospective students and the public. Analyzing accessibility of websites of higher educational institutions in India provides an opportunity to examine whether increased accessibility and attention to human rights practices in fact distorts perceptions of abuse in education. Hence accessible websites have great significance in reaching out education and information about institutions of higher learning.

NAAC Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions in India

The NAAC, is an autonomous body established by the UGC of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. It was established in September 1994 at Bangalore for evaluating the performance of the Universities and Colleges in the Country. NAAC's mandate includes the task of performance evaluation, assessment and accreditation of universities and colleges in the country. The philosophy of NAAC is based on objective and continuous improvement rather than being punitive or judgmental, so that all institutions of higher learning are empowered to maximize their resources opportunities and capabilities. Assessment is a performance evaluation of an institution and /or its units and is accomplished through a process based on self-study and peer review using defined criteria. Accreditation refers to the certification given by NAAC which is valid for a period of five years. At present the Assessment and Accreditation by NAAC is done on a voluntary basis.

Assessment and Accreditation is broadly used for understanding the "Quality Status" of an institution. In the context of Higher Education, the accreditation status indicates that the particular HEIs – a College, a University or any other recognized Unit therein, meets the standards of quality as set by the Accreditation Agency, in terms of its performance, related to the educational processes and outcomes, covering the curriculum, teaching-learning evaluation, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources, organization governance, financial well being and student services. Students with disability are also beneficiaries of higher education from these NAAC accredited centers of learning. An accessible website of these higher education institutions can stimulate academic environment, with an active participation and easy access to students with disabilities and initiate steps for higher education.

Human Rights and Accessibility of Websites

Websites are information in digital format. Human right to information is today global. Hypertext mark-up language (HTML) is the non-programmable technology used to create most websites. It can be augmented with other features (e.g.: IBM 2003) and it is these features that add complexity to WebPages and are often the causes of barriers to accessibility. In their study on the quest make accessibility a corporate article of faith at Microsoft, Leonard A Sandler, et al., (2005) reiterates that, according to United States Department of Justice (USODJ) and World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) it is important to include text equivalents to non-text elements (such as images and multimedia objects) so that these textual descriptions can be rendered as speech or Braille output by assistive technologies, enabling access to the content regardless of disability or device constraints. Many of the design technologies that pose barriers to persons with disabilities are those that allow multimedia to be included in the website. Multimedia requires users to rely on more than one sense, usually vision and hearing, to fully comprehend the information being presented. This poses obvious barriers to someone with a disability affecting either of these senses.

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The Growth of ICT in India

There is an exponential Growth in Information Technology (IT) in India. Personal Computer (PC) penetration in India is 18 per 1000 as per Manufacturer's Association of Information Technology (MAIT) annual report published in July 2006. In India as on March 2013, according to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), there were 164.81 million active Internet subscribers. This is according to the report 'The Indian Telecom Services performance Indicators' of January – March, 2013 released on 1st August, 2013. I-Cube [Internet in India] Study released and conducted annually by IMRB International and Internet and Mobile Association of India [IAMAI]. This emphasizes the need of such cost effective technology with global reach. Thus it validates the use of websites to bridge the gap and outreach.

Information & Communication Technology (ICT) also has been emphasized in Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) & United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) guidelines. It has specifically directed on application of ICT for "Access to information and communications, including information, communication and assistive technologies" for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Therefore accessible website form a pre-requisite for the NAAC accredited universities in India working higher education, if they want to provide access to information and fulfill their communication needs to the students.

Accessibility Rights of PWDs a Human Right

Articles 8, 9 and 21 of UNCRPD guidelines deal with awareness, accessibility and access to information. Article 9.2 (g) & (h) of UNCRPD especially lay down that, states should facilitate access for PWDs to new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet. I fact, in their report on 'Making mobile phones and services accessible fo persons with disabilities' published by the International Telecommunicatio Union (ITU) in cooperation with Global initiative for inclusive Informatio and Communication Technologies (G3ict), Nirmita Narasimhan et.al., (201 state that the article 9 makes provisions for promoting assistive technologie and information in alternative formats. Article 9.2 (f) states that signatorie must promote forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities t ensure their access to information. In Article 9.2b(g), the Convention outline the mandate to ensure access to "new information and communicatio technologies and systems, including the Internet". Further, as per Article 9. (h), State Governments must promote design and development of accessib information and communications technologies and systems from an ear stage in order to make them accessible at minimum cost.

The Convention also calls for states to ensure that all educational, cultur recreational and official materials are available to PWDs in accessible format The students of higher education are of no exception. In the joint publicatio of International Telecommunication Union and G3ict, 'e-Accessibility Polic Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities' accessibility is considered as a measure o the extent to which a product or service can be used by a person with disabili as effectively as it can be used by a person without that disability. Unite Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, (2008) on commemoration of th International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in New York, 3 December 20 remarked, 'Accessibility being a human right has many aspects. It means acce to the Internet and communications technologies'.

However the 'Information and Technology Act 2000 of India', is entire silent on the subject of web accessibility. Similarly, while there are fragmente pieces of legislation which vaguely address the questions of availability an accessibility of public information and cultural and educational materia there are explicit Acts or Guidelines or provisions which recognize the rig of disabled persons in India, to accessible information on an equal basis wi others. They are provided in the 'Guidelines for Indian Government Website an integral part of central secretariat manual of office procedure (Verma Nee et. al., 2009)' prepared by National Informatics Centre (NIC) and adopte by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG Given the expanding scope of technologies, it is of immediate urgency th the Government addresses this issue and makes the necessary additions a modifications in the PWD Act and the Right To Information (RTI) Act to ma it obligatory for states to provide all information in accessible formats as as seriously consider coming out with a comprehensive policy and guidelines for accessibility of information.

Website provides the Central and State Universities in India, an opportunity to communicate with the common student, without incurring the exorbitant costs of the traditional media like satellite channels, newspapers, television and the radio. With Internet penetration increasing at the rate of about 16 percent every year Central and State Universities in India, cannot ignore the large student base of website surfers and Internet users.

Making Website for Students with Disabilities

If the parameters of a website's communication capabilities are met by NAAC accredited universities in India, such as the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) compliance under Markup language, then we may consider a website as 'good website for disability communication'. There are various parameters to test a website's communication capabilities. For this research, the parameters used to study the websites of NAAC accredited Central and State Universities in India are accessibility, design, interactive and participatory features. Considering equal opportunities provided under the Persons with Disability Act 1995, this research also looks into the equalization and normalization theories with respect to the Internet. Identifying the most important tasks that people come to website to complete, and helping them do so as quickly and efficiently as possible, will be critical to the success of website.

Features of a Good Website

According to Nygaard, (2003), the President of Mount Evans Designs specializing in professional web design, the ten top features of a good websites are as follows:

1. Easy to read
2. Easy to navigate
3. Comfortably viewed.
4. Quick to download
5. Avoid dead links
6. Keep the content fresh
7. Clear and to the point.
8. Keep your target audience in mind.
9. Provide a Form for website visitors to contact you
10. Browser compatible

Objectives

The objective of the study is to assess the qualities of website designed by Central and State Universities in India in terms of Information Dissemination, Accessibility, Design, Interactive and participatory features, in fulfilling human rights.. The study also aimed at measuring these features in all the websites selected for the study, using validation methods already available on the Internet.

Research Questions

i. Does the website have Information Dissemination Features?

ii. Does the website follow the guidelines of UNCRPD with reference to accessibility rights, - access to information?

iii. Is the website designed to meet the human rights of category of students with disabilities, such as availability of screen reader, font size increase, color change, alternate texts and Indian Sign Language?

iv. Do the websites of Central and State Universities in India conform to the accessible Design features such as 'F' Pattern (does the website have the shape of letter 'F' in their design & lay out) for fast viewing of a website?

v. Are the websites of Central and State Universities in India more interactive or participatory in nature for persons with disabilities for human rights?

Methodology

Since this study is essentially aimed at qualities of a website designed by NAAC accredited Central and State Universities in India in terms of design formal, functional and accessible features, care was taken to choose the websites available on the internet using 'Google' as the primary search engine on 3rd December 2013 to assess and measure these features. The specific day 3rd December 2013, being 'World Disability Day' was selected for studying the accessibility features of these websites, considering the maximum significance of the day in a year for persons with disabilities in India. However it may be noted that 10th December 2013 was also declared by United Nations General Assembly as 'Human Rights Day'.

On this particular day the 137 websites of various Central and State Universities in India were carefully studied. These universities were NAAC accredited as per the list displayed in the website of UGC on 3rd December 2013. Screen shots of the websites were also used as part of the sample. In the study the researcher has tested these websites for W3C compliance and assessed them. The assessment was based on the following parameters: Information & Dissemination, Accessibility, Design and Interactive participatory features. The same was done using the inventory of the websites and the structural analysis for tabulation of the data. As the websites followed no single standard, there was a need to standardize the website area. The screen shots of the every home page of the 137 websites were captured and printed it out. These prints were then over laid with an 'F' shape on top of it, just below the masthead of the website.

The content analysis of the website in terms of accessibility was done online using the web based validator tools for accessibility. The Universal Resource Locator (URL) of the website of the organization for higher education to be tested was typed in the address slot and tested for its validation online. The results of the test were considered as data for analysis. The online free test tools used for accessibility in this study includes validator tools for 'markup validation', 'cascading style sheets validator', 'mobile validator', 'link check validator' and 'unicorn validator'. They are available in the following links:

1. http://validator.w3.org/
2. http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/
3. http://validator.w3.org/mobile/
4. http://validator.w3.org/checklink
5. http://validator.w3.org/unicorn/

Sampling

The present research is a survey with purposive sampling. In the Year 2010, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India,vide letter no. D. O. No. 16-13/2010-DD III dated 13th December 2010, made an allotment of Rs.20 lakh per website, under Scheme of Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) and requested all Central/State Universities recognized by UGC to provide self contained proposals. Hence only 137 websites belonging to Central (42) and State Universities (95) in India with NAAC accreditation were selected as sample for the study. Initially each selected website was browsed in search of various aspects in terms of design, formal, functional and accessible features. Later they were classified into two groups i.e., those features that belonged to websites of Central Universities and those that belonged to State Universities. Thus each accessible feature of the website collected would fall into these two groups and a comparative study was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version-16.

The researcher has chosen only those websites that appear on the firs page of the 'Google' search. This is important, because if the Meta tags of website are not designed properly, the link does not appear on the first page o Google search, unless the website is extremely popular. The list of 137 websit studied and their URLs are included in the Annexure-1 of this paper.

Limitations

- Due to paucity of time and resources, only 137 websites were studie There were 42 websites belonging to Central University and 95 websit belonging to State University category.
- Websites selected for the study included those Central & Sta Universities with NAAC Accreditation as on 3rd December 2013.
- The websites were downloaded, assessed and analyzed only on 3r December 2013 i.e., World Disabled Day. No updates were studied.
- The accessibility of electronic documents linked with web page is n included in the study.
- Only websites in English Language was selected for the study.

Analysis and Discussion

During the study, it was observed that all the websites of Central an State Universities in India with NAAC accreditation was able to be opene using the URL link provided in the list by UGC. But none of the websites ha basic features of accessibility such as screen reader, font size or color chang alternative text for the visuals for the blind and use of captions for the video o Indian Sign Language for the Deaf Persons.

It has been observed that maximum number of websites of Universi under study belonged to State University categories (95). However, only 4 Central University websites were part of the study.

Table 1. Type of NAAC accredited universities

Type of University	NAAC accredited Universitie
CENTRAL	42 (30.7%)
STATE	95 (69.3%)
Total	137 (100%)

Information & Dissemination Features

Providing and disseminating information through website content i vernacular/local language, is one of the strong information and disseminati features of a website, in terms of its reach to the rural masses. In a cou

India, it is important to have the website content in vernacular/local language. During the study, it was observed that most of the websites were in English and 24.8 per cent websites (Figure 1 &Table 2) had vernacular/local language information features among both central and state universities.

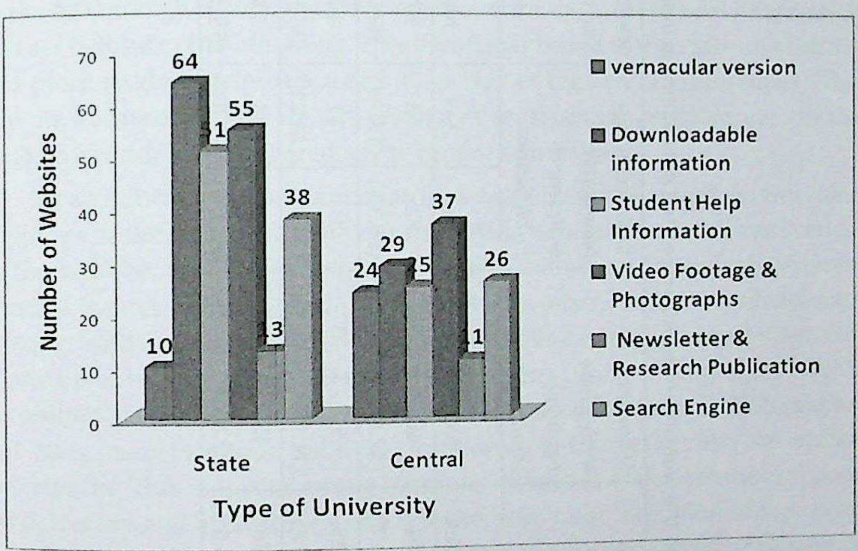


Figure 1. Type of organizations of higher education in India and information dissemination features of websites

In the above Table 2 and Figure 1, it may be seen that very few websites (24.8 per cent) of NAAC accredited universities had vernacular version. In fact most websites (83.2 per cent) of the universities had English as the language for providing information. It may be noted that 57.1per cent of central universities provided, websites in vernacular medium. However, all the websites which provided content in vernacular language had taken care to either use a dynamic font or facilitate font download in their website.

One of the main characteristics of a good website is downloadable information feature. As many as 67.9 per cent of the websites had lot of downloadable content. From Table 2 and Figure 1, it is clear that majority of the NAAC accredited universities websites in India had downloadable information contents for the users. The downloadable information for the users consisted of general information about university, application forms, training/courses and information about examination centers, scholarships, teachers, professionals, list of members of the senate, other programs – Vision & Mission statements, official documents, current news, newsletter, press releases etc.

Table 2. Information and dissemination facility offered in the websites of NAAC accredited universities in India

Type of University	*Websites with Vernacular*		*Wesbistes with Downloadable Information*		*Websites with Student Help Information*		*Websites with Video Footage& Photogrphs*		*Websites with Newsletter & Research Publications*		*Websites with Search Engine*	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
State	85 (89.5%)	10 (10.5%)	31 (32.6%)	64 (67.4%)	44 (46.3%)	51 (53.7%)	40 (42.1%)	55 (57.9%)	82 (86.3%)	13 (13.7%)	57 (60%)	38 (40%)
Central	18 (42.9%)	24 (57.1%)	13 (31%)	29 (69%)	17 (40.5%)	25 (59.5%)	5 (11.9%)	37 (88.1%)	31 (73.8%)	11 (26.2%)	16 (38.1%)	26 (61.9%)
Total	103 (75.2%)	34 (24.8%)	44 (32.1%)	93 (67.9%)	61 (44.5%)	76 (55.5%)	45 (32.8%)	92 (67.2%)	113 (82.5%)	24 (17.5%)	73 (53.3%)	64 (46.7%)

Student helpful features, such as learning materials, syllabus, list of faculty members, time table and list of holidays are inevitable in an institute of higher learning. In the table: 2, it may be seen that 55.5 per cent of websites of the NAAC accredited universities in India had student helpful/friendly contents. In the field of higher education it is significant for the users to have information that are helpful in their learning. However it may be noted that state universities had more student helpful features than that of the central universities. This may be because of the constant change of professionals, syllabus etc., in the state universities as compared to the central universities.

As an information dissemination feature, display of photographs and video clippings in the websites is one way to provide information and attractiveness to the website. It will however, create barrier for access to students who are blind, if it does not provide voice over. On the other hand, for students with hearing impairment, the video clippings without captioning or subtitles, will create a barrier for access. Majority of the websites (67.5 per cent) of the NAAC accredited universities in India provided video clippings and photographs. But they were without subtitles, captions or alternative text or audio-description. This indicates strong informatory feature of the website and poor participatory and accessibility of a website, with clear indication of top down approach towards communication to students who are disabled. Inclusion of Newsletters/ Research Publications in the websites is one way to providing regular or current information and attractiveness to the student users of the website. It will however, create barrier for access to persons with blindness, if it does not provide screen reader or voice to the text.

Inclusion of Websites with 'Search Engine' provides immediate access to current information about the university to the students. This will save the precious time of the student in searching information already available in the website of the university. It may be noted that only 46.7 per cent of the websites of the NAAC accredited universities in India provided this facility in their websites.

Accessibility

If website is the face of an organization in the new medium, its Global reach- ability can be only assessed based on its accessibility. World Wide Web Consortiuma (W3C) compliance is a qualification for any website that can be easily accessible by students with disability. During the research study, the researcher made exclusive study of the barrier-free environment and universal design of each website of the NAAC accredited universities in India. It is necessary to have a barrier free digital design as per UNCRPD guidelines vide article 8 on 'awareness raising', article 9 on 'accessibility' and article 21 on 'access to information'. Web accessibility for an institute of higher education mean those students with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, and intera with the website and that they can utilize, participate and contribute to th website. Web accessibility also benefits others, including older students wit changing abilities due to aging. Web accessibility encompasses all disabiliti that affect access to the Web, including visual, auditory, and physical, speec cognitive, and neurological disabilities.

The field of accessibility for PWDs, India has been evolving rapidly t match developments at International level. UN adopted UNCRPD guidelin on 13 December 2006 and India is one of the few countries, which signed i on very first day of introduction. On 1st October 2007, Indian Governme ratified the Convention, which means it is legally abided by the Conventio The coming into force of the UNCRPD guidelines triggered off a fresh wav of campaigns for the rights of PWDs in countries around the globe. Henc W3C compliance in terms of accessibility to students with disabilities mean following the rules for the language, use of alternate text for images, availabili of screen reader, providing choice of font color and size, subtitles for visual use of sign language for the Deaf in the website. According to W3C guideline the process of verifying whether a document actually follows the rules for th language(s) it uses is called validation, and the tool used for that is a validato

The process of verifying whether a document actually follows the rules for th language(s) it uses is called validation, and the tool used for that is a validato

The W3C Markup Validation

The Markup validator is a free service by W3C that helps check the validi of Web documents. Most Web documents are written using markup language such as Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) or XHTML. These languages ar defined by technical specifications, which usually include a machine-readab formal grammar (and vocabulary). The act of checking a document agai these considerations is called validation, and this is what the Markup validato does. Validating Web documents is an important step which can dramatical help improving and ensuring their quality and it can save a lot of time a money. Validation is, however, neither a full quality check, nor is it strict equivalent to checking for conformance to the specification. This validator c process documents written in most markup languages. Supported docume types include the HTML (through HTML 4.01) and XHTML (1.0 and 1. family, MathML, SMIL and SVG (1.0 and 1.1, including the mobile profiles).

Validity is one of the quality criteria for a Web page, but there are ma others. In other words, a valid Web page is not necessarily a good web pa but an invalid Web page has little chance of being a good web page. For that reason, the fact that the W3C Markup validator (validator.w3.org) says that one page passes validation does not mean that W3C assesses that it is a good page. It only means that a tool (not necessarily without flaws) has found the page to comply with a specific set of rules. No more, no less. This is also why the 'valid...' icons should never be considered as a "W3C seal of quality".

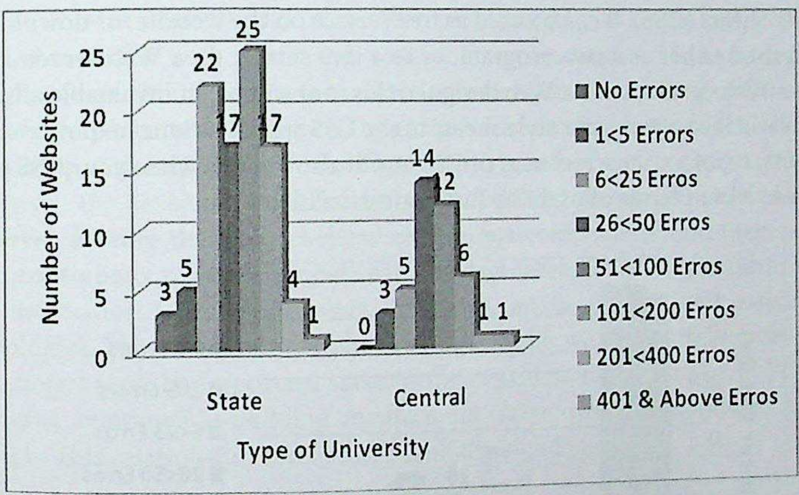


Figure 2. Number of errors detected in W3C Mark up validation test of website of NAAC accredited universities in India

Table 3. Type of universities and the websites with errors detected in W3C validation test

Type of University	*Number of Errors Detected Using W3C Mark Up Validation Test*								Total
	No	1<5	6<25	26<50	51<100	101<200	201<400	401 & Above	
State	3	5	22	17	25	17	4	1	95
Central	0	3	5	14	12	6	1	1	42
Total	3	8	27	31	37	23	5	3	137

Even though 'web accessibility' means that students with disabilities can use the Website, (in Table 3 and Figure 2), all the websites of Central Universities failed to pass the W3C mark up validation test on the day of the study, whereas there were 3 State University websites without W3C mark up errors. The summary details of the validation test results and other details o the specific accessibility features in website of NAAC accredited universities i India are given in Annexure-1

The W3C CSS Validation

The W3C Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) Validation Service is free softwar created by the W3C to help Web designers and Web developers check Cascadin Style Sheets (CSS). It can be used as free service on the website, or downloade and used either as a java program, or as a java servlet on a Web server. If yo are a Web developer or a Web designer, this tool will be an invaluable ally. No only will it compare your style sheets to the CSS specifications helping you fin errors, typos, or incorrect uses of CSS, it will also tell you when your CSS pose some risks in terms of usability (w3.org/css-validator).

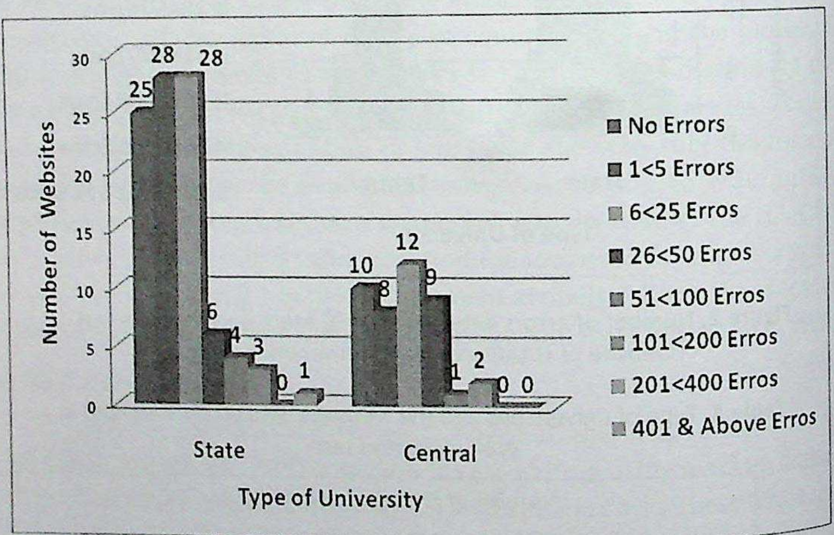


Figure 3. Type of universities and the websites with errors detected with W3C CSS validation test

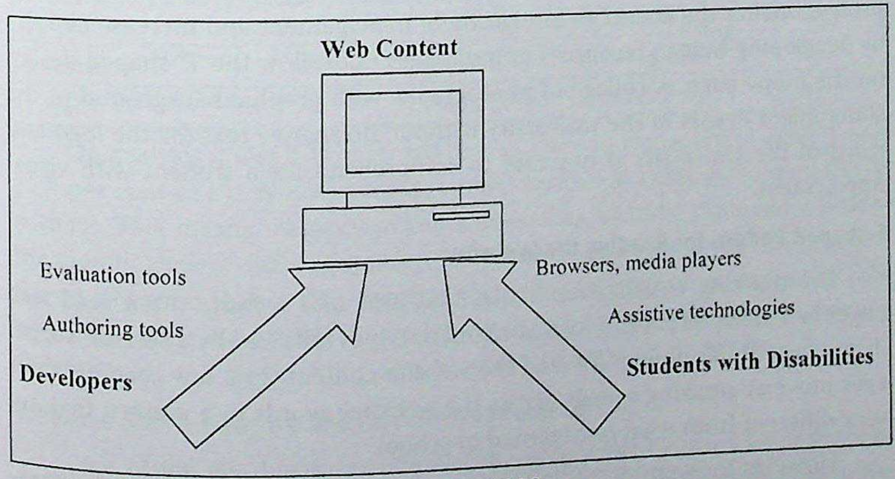
Table 4. Type of universities and the websites with errors detected with W3C CSS validation test

Type of University	*Number of CSSV Alidation Errors Detected*								Total
	No Errors	1<5	6<25	26<50	51<100	101<200	201<400	401 & Above	
State	25(26.3%)	28	28	6	4	3	0	1	95
Central	10 (10.2%)	8	12	9	1	2	0	0	42
Total	35 (25.5%)	36	40	15	5	5	0	1	137

Table 4 and Figure 3, depicts that there were 25.5 per cent of the websites of NAAC accredited universities in India, which passed the W3C CSS validation test. Almost equal number of websites also had less than 5 errors in the CSS validation test results, thus providing some form accessibility to students with disabilities to the websites of NAAC accredited universities in India.

Website Components & Relationship

The Internet and World Wide Web are emerging as important public relations tools for both profit and non-profit organizations. Little evidence exists, however, about the extent to which new technologies help organizations build relationships with its users (Figure 4). Each website components have a relationship with each other. It may be at various points of usage or production. It begins at the developer level during production and then finally ends at the user level. During the process there are various components that take care of the continuous relationship between the developers. It includes authoring tools, evaluation tools, the content, browsers, media players, and assistive technologies. NAAC accredited universities in India with its communicators and scholars have an important stake in the development of the World Wide Web as a relationship-building medium for manpower development and research. This relationship can be explained through Figure 4.



Source: Poothullil J. Mathew Martin 2009

Figure 4. Relationship of Web Content and Its Users

Hence it is imperative that each component is taken care to keep the relationship, while designing the website. Developer should always keep in mind the end user of the website while designing the same. In case of websites developed by NAAC accredited universities in India, accessibility shoul be one the main component that needs to be taken care to ensure Right t Education (RTE) for all. To enable accessibility, assistive technologies com to the rescue of the developer and the user of the website. In fact accordin to Jane Seale (2010) digital inclusion is broadly understood as 'a phenomeno whereby marginalized people, in this case students with disability, are abl to access and meaningfully participate in the same learning, employmen social and citizenship activities as others, through access to and use of digit technologies such as computers'.

Design Features

While studying design, the researcher has concentrated on the 'F'-shap reading pattern (Jakob Nielson, 2006). However the reading patterns of th persons with various disabilities are also being considered. For this, th researcher has captured a screenshot of the home page of every website an overlaid 'F' shape on top of it, just below the masthead of the website.

Though most of the websites, under research study followed the 'F' shap design pattern, there are some glaring exceptions. The Website of the Indi Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) set up in 1963 by the Government of Ind as an autonomous organization and later became a deemed university to hel professionalize the country's foreign trade management and increase expor by developing human resources in India does not follow the 'F' shaped desig on the home page. A collage of photographs with graphic background of th some major events of the University without alternative text for the logo an icons of the University is not easy to comprehend for a student with visu impairment.

F-shaped Pattern for Reading the Websites

Eye-tracking visualization shows that user of a website often read we pages in 'F'-shaped pattern: two horizontal stripes followed by a vertical strip 'F' for fast. That's how users read the website content. In a few seconds the eyes move at amazing speeds across the website's words in a pattern that ar very different from what one learned in school.

However the website reading pattern of persons with disabilities is a matt for research. This study has not made an attempt in this direction. Howev efforts were made to assess the websites of NAAC accredited universities India to analyze the existing dominant pattern.

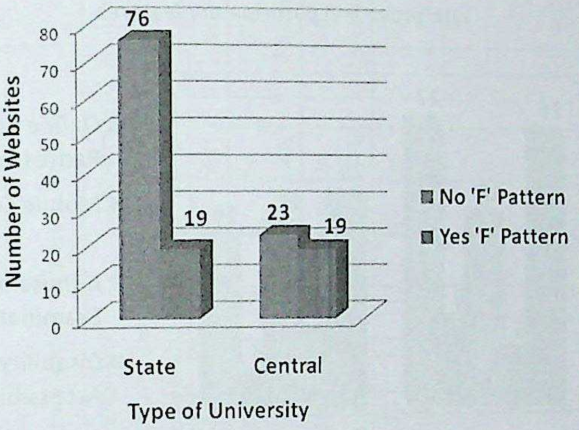


Figure 5. Websites of organizations with 'F' pattern design

Table 5. Websites of organizations with 'F' pattern design

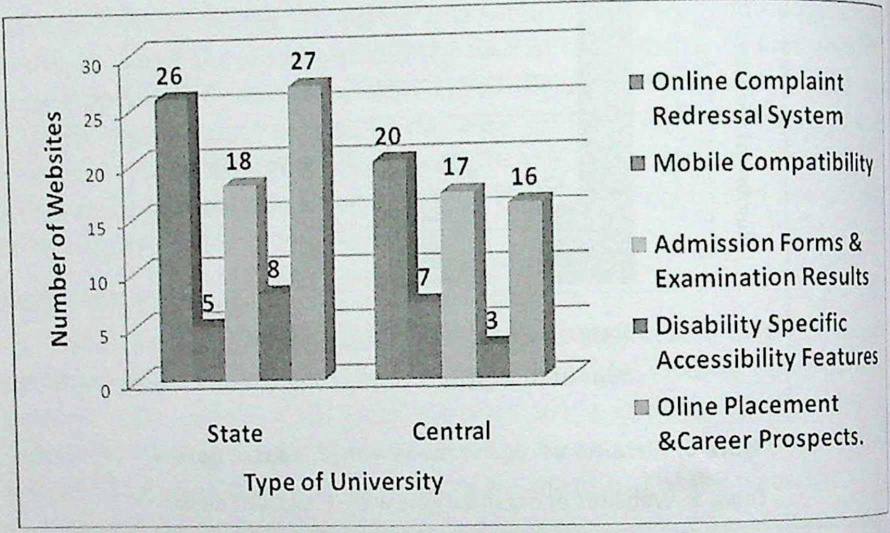
Type of University	*Design 'F' Pattern*		*Total*
	No	Yes	
State	76 (80%)	19(20%)	95
Central	23(54.8%)	19(45.2%)	42
Total	99(72.3%)	38(27.7%)	137

On analysis it was it is observed that as given in Figure 5 and Table 5 only 27.7 per cent of the NAAC accredited universities in India, have used the 'F' pattern. This means majority of the Universities in India does not consider the significance of reading pattern of students. This is relevant in terms of the equalization theory that suggests that small or big, recent or ancient, the universities of India are able to compete on equal terms for imparting manpower development and research for persons with and without disabilities.

Websites with Interactive and Participatory Features

One of the good features of a website is to provide forms for visitors to contact or to give feedback. The researcher has analyzed the websites on the participation features like availability of Online Admission Forms, Examination results, Disability Specific Accessibility Features, Placement & Career Prospects, Mobile Friendliness, Online petitions/complaints/suggestions form, etc. In the study conducted, it was observed that the websites of very few universities have these features.

Figure 6. NAAC accredited universities in India with websites that have interactive and participatory features



As per Figure 6 and Table 6 it was found that 76.8 per cent of the websites o the universities have features such as links to admission forms and examinatio results, which is a common website participation feature. Most common featu of a website of NAAC accredited Universities in India is general informatio about the Educational system available on it and relation with other interactiv and participatory features. Quite often students with disabilities have to rely o online complaint redressal system due to the constraints in travel or mobilit The Figure 6 and Table 6 indicates that only 33.6 per cent websites of NAA accredited Universities in India provided online complaint redressal syste facility in their website. Most of the NAAC accredited Universities in India d have specialized educational programs or courses with specialized professiona for higher education. Hence it is important that NAAC accredited Universitie in India, to provide specific accessible features, like screen reader, font si and background color change, Indian Sign Language etc, for specialized highe educational services they offer. In the table: Table 6 further shows that only per cent of the websites of NAAC accredited Universities in India provide specific accessible features in their websites. It supports the claim of Selwy and Facer (2007) that 'the focus of digital inclusion has until recently been o increasing people's access to technologies and their abilities to use them.'

Conclusion

A decade has passed since IT Act has been passed in India. Huma Rights to information is still not achieved by Educational Institutions. Eve

Table 6. NAAC accredited universities in India with websites that have interactive and participatory features

Type of University	*Websites with Online Complaint Redressal System*		*Websites with Mobile Friendliness Validation*		*Websites with Admission Forms and Examination Results*		*Websites with Disability Specific Accessible Features*		*Websites with on Line Placement and Career Prospects*	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
State	69 (72.6%)	26 (27.4%)	90 (94.7%)	5 (5.3%)	22 (23.2%)	73 (76.8%)	87 (91.6%)	8 (8.4%)	68 (71.6%)	27 (28.4)
Central	22 (52.4%)	20 (47.6%)	35 (83.3%)	7 (16.7%)	13 (31%)	29 (69)%)	39 (92.9%)	3 (7.1%)	26 (61.9%)	16 (38.1%)
Total	91 (66.4%)	46 (33.6%)	125 (91.2%)	12 (8.8%)	5 (3.6%)	35 (25.5%)	126 (92%)	11 (8%)	94 (68.6%)	43 (31.4%)

though IT Act is silent about the web accessibility features, NAAC accredite Universities in India have made efforts to use this new medium with Global an local reach. A good website of NAAC accredited Universities in India, in orde to promote human rights to higher education for students with disabilitie would include all possible features of accessibility, participation, informatio and networking. It would be technically a complaint and inhuman if thes features of website accessibility were not present. In India every website o NAAC accredited Universities should ideally have vernacular version of th site for the educated and the net savvy local student population. These NAA accredited Universities in India cannot afford to ignore the large population o Internet users among students with disabilities. The website of NAAC rank the highest in terms of number of features available followed by the websit of Karnataka University (www.kannadauniversity.org) and Punjab Universit (http://puchd.ac.in/). The front page of most of websites is organisatio centric. In this aspect the normalization theory holds true. The most glarin aspect in this study is the lack of vernacular/local language version of th website in central universities. Clearly these websites have not targeted th neo-literate population, which would prefer reading content in their ow language. Very few of the websites have the links to new interactive & soci communication tools like blogs, guest books, and RSS feeds. Majority of the (66.4 per cent) do not even have feedback or complaint form details (Figure &Table 6). However it is encouraging to note that on "World Disability Da i.e., 3rd December 2013, some of the websites of NAAC accredited universitie in India had accessible features. The details of the analysis and results are give in annexure-I. The accessible features decreased the digital divide between th students with disabilities and these institutes offering higher education in Indi Moreover efforts are being made by the NAAC accredited universities in Indi towards meeting the demands of digital convergence, in terms of accessibili by students with disabilities. The research scope of this study was very limite A more exhaustive study could reveal more interesting accessibility aspects o how the NAAC accredited universities in India look at internet and website a medium of mass communication to ensure advancement of human rights an the access to higher education for all.

[a] World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international community establishe in 1997, which develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth the Web.

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Chapter 8

Disability Representation in Bollywood Industry: A Discourse Analysis

Mr. Santosh Kumar Biswal

Abstract

The mass media play vital roles in shaping public perceptions on a variety of important issues through the information emanated from its various channels. It has to strike a proper balance among information, education and entertainment. Cinema, a form of mass media, is a visual art of story–telling with rich inputs of music, screenplay, cast and script and mirrors the contemporary society. Disability is a development issue as it has direct and indirect links with poverty. With around 40-90 million Persons with Disability (PWDs) in India, the role of media, cinema in particular, is of paramount importance to represent them in a pragmatic approach. The Bollywood industry considered for making good number of films in the world, can be instrumental for judicious portrayal of disabled characters, resulting in social change. The current research paper attempts to explore the disability representation in the Bollywood industry.

Key Words: Disability, Media, Bollywood, Human Rights, Representation, Development

Introduction

The media have become an integral part of human life as it informs, educates and entertains the society. It debates various social issues by bringing them to the public forum through newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films and the Internet. However, sometimes it is turning a blind eye to address such issues by its improper representation, adding to woes of the civil society (www.disabilityplanet.co.uk, 2012). Since India is a home to disabled and the socio-economic conditionsarenot judiciously addressed, there is an urge need on the part of media to focus on the issues. Hence, it is imperative t critically understand the disability portrayal in various media forms like pres radio, television, films and new media.

Suffice to say, film is an effective medium which properly captures th society. It can of information, education and entertainment type to meet th diversified interest and demand of media consumers. It can act as a base o social change in the fields of education, health, profession and social status. I informs, moulds the people's behaviour and creates public opinion (Mohapatr 2012). It can be instrumental to fight against exploitation and deprivation an attempts to usher in a healthy societal atmosphere over a period of time.

India is believed to be one of the most filmmaking countries in the worl There are several films made in Hindi and other Indian languages wher disabled has been portrayed in numerous roles and tones. So, it is unanimousl agreed that films can be the portrayal of socio-economic and cultural aspec of disabled persons. It also shows the proven relationship between disabili and the Bollywood industry.

The Bollywood industry and disability representation can be trac back to the film Dosti in the year 1964, even though several Hindi movie have portrayed disability characters on the silver screen (Shradha, 2010). Th transition from the film Dosti to Barfi! has undergone a sea change in term of depictions and dialogues. However, the role of cinema for the cause o social change still dogs if the representation of disabled in the cinema is take into critical consideration. Of course, the magnitude of stereotyping disable characters has reduced to minimum.The approach in the movies has change from charity to welfare and from welfare to human rights.

Concept of Disability: An Understanding

The World Health Organization (2011) defines the term 'Disability' in broad sense, indicating to impairments, activity limitations, and participatio restrictions. It is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitatio is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or actio while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual involvement in life situations. Hence, disability is a topic of complex, dynami multi-dimensional and contested.

According to the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) or Equal Opportuniti Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act, 1995, 'Disability' includ Blindness, low vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impairment, loco disability, mental retardation, and mental illness. The act further defines a 'person with disability' as suffering from not less than forty per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority. Under PWD Act 1995, the disabilities mentioned above have been included in order to enable the persons suffering from disabilities to derive certain benefits/ concessions provided by the State Govt. /U.T. Administration/ Central Ministries/ Department and Local Authorities. The new definition of disability includes persons with any impairment that has a 'substantial and long-term adverse effect' on the ability of a person to carry out normal day-to-day activities (National Human Right Commission, 2005).

Total Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) has touched to around 40-90 million (Bakshi, 2010). India is accommodating the largest population of disabled people in the world. According to the National Sample Survey (NSS) of India estimations in the last three decades i.e., 1981, 1991 and 2001, there were 12 million, 16.15 million and 18.49 million people respectively and constituting 1.8 and 1.9 percent of the total population (Klasing, 2007; Karna, 2000). Despite huge population and unlimited sufferings on their part, they have become the most politically invisible and under-represented groups in the country. Unlike other minority groups, they are subjugated and unable to form as special groups to take part in the politics at either the state or national level. So, the socio-economic and political participation of disabled remain in precarious conditions.

When a child is born with disability, it is dogmatically accepted as one's fate or destiny. The belief in karma, or payment for past deeds, underlies the accepting spirit (Singhi, Goyal, Pershad, Singhi & Walia, 1990). Javed Abidi, Director of National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People opinions, "Six to seven percent of the population in India are disabled. But where are these people? There is still a social stigma attached to disability. Respondents might choose to conceal disability. If the daughter's disability is revealed, the sister won't get married" (*The Hindu*, 2011). Disability is a development issue as it has and direct and indirect links to poverty. Disability may increase the risk of poverty and poverty may increase the risk of disability. Many instances were found where persons with disability and their families suffered from gross socio-economic disparities and problems. Hence, it gives rise to the disability right movements in India.

Disability Rights Movement

The Disability Rights Movement (DRM) refers to a movement which aims to safeguard equal opportunities based on the rules and regulations for the persons with disabilities. Rights cover the areas of health, education, employment, accessibility and social status (Bagenstos, 2009). As the movement is development oriented, it tries to attain social change, ushering in a new age and new society for the disabled. Further, it leads to minimising the gap between the disabled and the non-disabled society.As a result, it gives impetus to the participation, empowerment and inclusive education which are essentials for smooth functioning of a healthy democracy.

The emergence of disabilityrights movement is not of very recent mark in India, but of nearly two decades old. However, the movement is still pretty shaky and suffers from certain short-comings. Its pace is sluggish and yet to be mainstreamed by paying attention fully from the public (Mol, 2012; Disability News and Information Service, 2006). Even if newly formed movements for certain causes are deeply taking off. In this connection, it is observed that feminists and lesbians have strong bases and forums to keep their movements forward. However, these kinds of forums and orientations are not prevalent in case of disability movement in India and other third world countries. They are poorly manifested because of lack of interest and coordination from various quarters of civil society.

Since media is treated asthe fourth pillar of the Indian democracy, it has greater role to play for safeguarding and strengthening the democracy. It can be possible when it functions as an instrumental for social movements like disability rights movement apart from regular functions. Number of examples can be cited when media performed its job meticulously to achieve social and economic equality between disabled and non-disabled persons (Abidi, 2010). Hence, media can be used for greater purpose to meet the increasing role and participation of disabled persons, aiming towards inclusive development. However, the role of media in India has been marred by numerous obstacles. The mainstream media is market-driven and rarely pays attention to the social issues. In a view to boost up the rights movement for the disabled, media should foster awareness, empowerment and participation at all the levels. Ultimately, the aim is to attain inclusive development which claims overall development of a nation.

The model of disability rights hastransformed from time to time. The transition has reached to the state of rights model from the medical model with the continuous efforts from various human rights groups and active interventions from governmental and corporate bodies (World Health Organization, 2011).The medical model and charity model of disability stress on the aspects of physical impairments and sympathy respectively without their participation and empowerment. On the other hand, rights model attempts to include the disabled in the process of inclusive development for attaining national development. It also covers the sense of conscientisation and frees the disabled from culture of silence.

Media, Bollywoodand Society

Mass media plays vital roles in shaping the public perceptions on a variety of important issues through the information emanated from its various channels. It also plays a larger role in shaping modern culture, shaping the public opinion by selecting and portraying a particular set of beliefs, values, and traditions. It attempts to shape reality to be more in line with that interpretation, by portraying a certain interpretation of reality (Lorimer & Scannell, 1994; Webb, 2008).

The onus is on media in constructing and reforming opinions and attitudes in the society. It has to strike a proper balance among information, education and entertainment. The Press Council of India Chairman Markandey Katju (2011) asserts that media can produce and disseminate entertainment programmes to the public. If media stress more on entertainment, there shall be less space or time to cover critically on social issues. This problem has gripped the Indian media and the social responsibility of media has reduced to minimum. Similarly, the coverage of disabled related issues in media occupies the least, as media has become 'lapdog' instead of 'watchdog'.

Harsh Pandey (2008) has rightly enunciated, "Cinema, popular or parallel, a visual art of story–telling with rich inputs of music, screenplay, cast and script,mirrors the contemporary society in which it functions. From emotional dramas to candy-floss romances to action-thrille, cinema derives its sustenance, ideas and imaginations from its surroundings. The images cinema creates, surreal or tangled wave of deceit, need to be in sync with societal aspirations and basic urge of humanity tore create and have fun and entertainment. In its long journey of more thana centur, cinema has transformed itself from being at a boo and absolute a virtual way of life."

Hindi cinema or the Bollywood industry, attempts to showcase the Indian culture in all its ramifications including family ties, wedding,engagements and other similar aspects of society (Gangar, 2012). Many times, we admit to the fact that social dynamics have always regulated the content of cinema. It has also been admitted that the social impact of the cinema in India is felt nationwide popularity of film-based programs on various television channels. Needless to say, mostly the young generations have been caught up by the film-song programmes. Popular film songs have bearings on the Indian collective memory and conscience.

The Indian cinema, especially the Bollywood speaks about fighting domestic demons like corruption and other social evils. The contemporary Hindi movies like *Lagaan*, *Chak de India* and *Rang de Basanti* were huge hits and stirred patriotic emotions among the audience. Adding feather to its cap, films like *Aarakshan* and *Rajneeti* took on the burning issue of reservation and corruption respectively and once again brought the light on the country's dire socio-political scenario. No doubt, thefilms have the power to encourage youths to fight against social evils like corruption. The films like *Pipli Live*, *3 Idiots*, *The Dirty Picture*, *Satyagraha*, *Barfi!*, *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* and *Ram Leelaare* other noteworthy movies which made their landmarks in the industry. The films like My *Name is Khan* and *Barfi*! attemptedto enhance the level of awareness on disability and activated the disability rights movements across the country.

Bringing about change in the society, films especially documentaries reinforce the democratic values of equality and freedom as well as personal dignity and community empowerment. Cinema covers the images of war, poverty, exploitation and the marginalised and gives a voice to the voiceless (*The Hindu*, 2008). However, the rarest of the rare movies have highlighted the issue of farmers' suicides in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Their plights have not been properly demonstrated on the silver screen.

Hindi movies made currently are stereotyped in nature. Syed Ali Mujtaba claims (2012), "According to Bollywood movies that are currently made, Indian Muslim doesn't go to office, they don't smile and their career graph does not follow the usual arch of human endeavour. Such factious images of Muslims inadvertently have started sounding real in the contemporary life. Before such blinkered vision could sync into the people's mindset, this dangerous development needs to be checked."

Contemporary Hindi films made currently are not free from flaws. Noted lyricist-scriptwriter Javed Akhtar comments thatrealism is a far cry in new age Bollywood. He feels the depiction of the common man in today's films is misleading and the quality of songs and language has deteriorated substantially. The middle class and rural culture seem to have no relations to cinema now-a-days (Bhirani, 2011).This depicts that contents of the contemporary movies are irrelevant and creating false consciousness among the gullible media consumers. In addition, they are creating violence, social tensions and consumerism among the viewers.

Now the Bollywood industry is not as simple as it was two decades before. It is getting more complex and slowly deviating from the social agendas. The movies are found packed with controversies pertaining to regions, profession, religion, culture, caste and the like. Overall, it can be concluded that the current Hindi movies are being dogged with several short-comings like vulgarity, sensationalism, hatred speech harming minor communities' sentiment, politicization, gross violence and sexism.

Emergence of the Bollywood Industry and Disability Representation

The *Bollywood* made its maiden voyage with the film *Raja Harishchandra* (1913)which was the first silent feature film by Dadasaheb Phalke. However, thefirst Indian sound film, Ardeshir Irani's Alam Ara (1931) was a major commercial success and later all the regional film industries quickly switched to sound filming. The film historians consider the period from the late 1940s to the 1960s as 'Golden Age' of Hindi cinema. Guru Dutt's film Pyaasa (1957) and Kaagaz Ke Phool (1959) and Raj Kapoor's films Awaara(1951) and Shree 420(1955) were noteworthy movies of those period. Modern cinema started during 1960s and early 1970s with the actors like Rajesh Khanna, Dharmendra, Sanjeev Kumar and Shashi Kapoor and actresses like Sharmila Tagore, Mumtaz and Asha Parekh. Amitabh Bachchan, known as 'angry young man' fromthe Bollywoodappeared with appealing dialogues and fighting scenes on the silver screen. Motivated to make realistic parallel cinema, directors like Shyam Benegal, Mani Kaul, Kumar Shahani, Ketan Mehta, Govind Nihalani and Vijaya Mehta continued their voyage in that direction (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004).

Bollywood's popularity went on increasing spree in the 2000s. The movies like *Lagaan* (2001), *Devdas* (2002), *Koi... Mil Gaya* (2003), *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2003), *Veer-Zaara* (2004), *Rang De Basanti* (2006), *Lage Raho Munnabhai* (2006), *Krrish* (2006), *Dhoom* 2 (2006), *Om Shanti Om* (2007), *Chak De India* (2007), *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (2008), *Ghajini* (2008), *3 Idiots* (2009), *My Name is Khan* (2010), and *Dabangg* (2010) were released in India and abroad in various multiplexes (Tridevi, 2008; www.boxofficeindia.com, 2010). Popular films from 2011 to late of 2014include*Satyagraha* (2013), *Bodyguard* (2011), *Ra. One* (2011), *The Dirty Picture* (2011), *Ready* (2011), *Agneepath* (2012), *Dabangg 2* (2012), *Ek Tha Tiger* (2012), *Rowdy Rathore* (2012), *Chennai Express* (2013), *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani* (2013), *Raanjhanaa* (2013),*Dhoom 3* (2013), *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* (2013), *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* (2013), *Aashiqui* 2 (2013), *Jai Ho* (2014), *Gulabi Gang* (2014), *Holiday* (2014) *and Kick* (2014) (www.bollywoodhungama.com, 2014; www.boxofficeindia.com, 2013; The Economic Times, 2011). The movies like *Finding Fanny, Ugly, Bang Bang, Haider, Sonali Cable, Happy New Year, Rang Rasiya, Happy Ending, All Is Well,* *P.K.*, *Welcome Back* and *Titli* are awaiting for their turn to hit the silver screen by end of the year 2014 (www.koimoi.com, 2014).

It's not new that Hindi films are portraying disability in various characters. It is believed that the association of the Bollywood with disability started with the film *Dosti* directed by Satyen Bose on the silver screen in the year 1964. The film *Dosti* from Rajshri Productions shows about two physically challenged, musically gifted youngsters are thrown on the streets of Mumbai and eventually they join hands to make a life and living (Shradha, 2010). Even though the film attracts the attentions of the viewers, characters of disability portrayal are of sympathetic in nature and draws flak from cine critics and social activists.

The film Koshish (1972) directed by Gulzar represents Jaya Bachchan and Sanjeev Kumar are speech-impaired lovers who get married. The movie is considered to be a landmark movie in the history of the Indian cinema and Sanjeev Kumar received National Film Awards for the best actor award in 1973. The film represents a hearing and speech-impaired couple and their conflicts, pain and struggle to carve out a niche for themselves in a desensitised society. The crux of the films is how two speech-impaired people can lead a life of their own. The success of the movies has resulted in remaking in Tamil as Uyarndhavargal in the year 1977 with Kamal Haasan and Sujatha (www.imdb.com, 2013).

Kamal Haasan and Sridevi starring in the movie Sadma (1983) directed by Balu Mahendra, is movie of disability representation (Shradha, 2010). In the movie actress loses her memory and regresses to her childhood. The actor is a school teacher who tries to deal with all sort of behaviour with the actress, who plays the disability character. Later she goes back to her memory and gets ready. In the last scene, Hassan attempts to jog Sridevi's memory, but in vain. Both Hassan and Sridevi play their characters well in the movie. However, there is no strong message on the social model of disability to the society. Moreover, the story revolves around the pity and welfare approach towards disability

The film *Khamoshi: The Musical* (1996) directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali is a story of Joseph (Nana Patekar) and Flavy Braganza (Seema Biswas), a hearing and speech-impaired couple in Goa. The portrayal of Nana and Biswas in terms of pathos, elation and jubilation are realistic. They have one son (Sam) who dies in an accident and daughter Annie (Manisha Koirala) whose dream to become a singer shatters. Then Raj (Salman Khan) come to the scene and falls in love with Annie and a baby boy born, and is followed by reconciliation between Joseph and Raj's family (Filmi geek, 2007). The film attempts to have a realistic presentation on the disabled characters to the cine lovers. Moreover, disabled characters enjoy the pragmatism approach on the silver screen.

The film *Koi Mil Gaya* (2003) is based on the protagonist Rohit Verma's mental state. This mild disability character has played by Hirthik Roshan who is a boy of 20 years but has a brain of an 8 year old. Hirthik could craftily display the body language, lingo and mannerisms pertaining to the character (Rai, 2005). However, no visible lessons learnt from the film even though the audience glued to the star actor Hirthik who plays the character of mentally challenged man. In addition, the stardom takes at the centrestage, pushing the sense of disability to the back.

The film *Black* (2004) directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali portrays Rani Mukherjee playing the character of Michelle who suffers from visual, hearing and speech impairments. Amitabh Bachchan playing the character of Debraj, does the role of Michelle's teacher. The teacher inspires the disability child for learning of variety of things. The movie throws lights on the problems of disability persons and how to overcome the problems they face. The movie also shows how one can make a disabled person achieve unimaginable goals. However, the movie has been criticised on certain grounds (www.planetbollywood.com, 2005). Questions are often raised how one can help one disabled person in achieving unimaginable goals without one acknowledges the will and the determination of a disabled person. Director Bhansali seems to be overwhelmed by the prospect of directing Bachchan and ignores of making the movie in a holistic manner. Again, this movie can be termed as hero based where Bachchan obsesses with the idea of improving the lives of disabled persons.

Professor Sudha Rai (2005) rightly asserts, "Filmmakers' keen revival of interest in the lives of the physically and mentally challenged begun a decade ago, has resulted in films that attempt the cross-over from commercial to socially purposeful cinema, though not always successfully. The films like Black (2005), Iqbal (2005), Taare Zameen Par (2007), Paa (2009) and My Name is Khan (2010) where audience could be exposed to the disability issues and types of disability in various forms of character."

The film Iqbal (2005) directed by Nagesh Kukoonoor portrays Shreyas Talpade playing the character of Iqbal. Iqbal suffers from hearing and speech impairments. He aims to overcome his difficulties and become a cricketer for the Indian national cricket team. The seasoned actor Naseeruddin Shah plays the character of Mohit, the coach of Iqbal. The movie represents the disability largely in a pragmatic approach without much sympathetic manipulation (Jha, 2006). Iqbal has not been portrayed helpless and dependent for the improvement in his cricketing career. The movie shows him as a normal human being, not a disabled person. The director Kukoonoor has taken special care and precautions to have audience sympathize with the situation rather than the character. It is said that this movie bridges the gap between the so-called offbeat films and commercial cinema.

The film Barfi! (2012) directed by Anurag Basu shatters the myth that differently-abled people or special people live a gloomy and grief-stricken life. Ranbir Kapoor plays the character of Barfi suffering from speech and hearing impairments, notifies you to relish life and live it in a king-size. Priyanka Chopra plays the autistic character of Jhilmil. Director Basu says that disabled persons find happiness in the smallest of things and keep on celebrating their lives constantly. However, it takes normal people much longer to be happy. This movie attempts to look at characters with physical disabilities from different perspectives.

Dr Rubina Lal, president, Society of Parents of Children with Autism Disorders, comments that the director of the movie has not got several things right in Barfi. However, making movie of this kind is a good attempt. It has brought autism into the public consciousness. In the movie, a few scenes are genuine like when Jhilmil wants to go to the loo. Priyanka's acting was well and thoughtful. However, she acted superficially to a greater extent as numbers of scenes are not really feasible for an autistic person. Dr. Lal also comments that movie is not a realistic portrayal of even the hearing impaired. However, she is hopeful about the film and its impact on the mindsets of the audience. At the same time, she credits with a realistic portrayal in Aamir Khan's Taare Zameen Par(www.ndtv.com, 2012). Overall, the message emanated from the movie Barfi! is truly inspiring. It sends the message that one's disabilities do not impede one's enjoyment of life.

Few other Hindi films like Lafangey Parindey (2009), Guzaarish (2010) and Paa (2010) have been instrumental in addressing disability issues. The character constructions in these films have been found pragmatic and bore possible positive consequences on the public. However, the production of such kind of films in India remains scarce. Important thing is to note here that the level of awareness level on disability is growing, but the pace is sluggish.

Rema Sundar (2005) points out that limited number of films have made on disability in India. Again, the representation of women disabled is very scant in those films. Generally, women disabled have been shown as mothers, sisters, wives or girl friends who need all time sympathy and care from non-disabled men. Their depictions in the films have been [illegible] roles and are dominated by non-disabled persons.As a result, the Indian films including Hindi films rarely show women disabledin important roles.

Disabled in the rural areas, women disabled, dalit disabled and locomoter disabled are projected in a bad light in Hindi movies. Like women disabled, disabled in the rural areas are shown cut off from the mainstream, causing sheer deprivation for them. Disabled from dalitcommunities also bear the brunt of ill-structured and prejudiced society. Generally, they are debarred from social, cultural and political participation. The depiction of locomotors disability is comparatively more than any other forms of disability in the films. Of course, the Bollywood industry is slowly witnessing the other forms of disability on the silver screens. Hence, these sections of disabled persons are found doubly discriminated, sending the strong message of inherent social blight in the Indian society.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the works in 'Four Theories of the Press' by Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson & Wilbur Schramm; Clifford G. Christians, Theodore L. Glasser, Denis McQuail, Kaarle Nordenstreng, and Robert A. White (2009) underscore the relevance of normative theories in the contemporary world linking to democracy. They also highlight on the changing phenomena of media and its chemistry with democratic ideals. The normative theories reflect how media should be, what is to be expected from them rather than what necessarily happens in practice and it is out of the political, cultural and economic context that the normative principles arise.

The current study is apt to the social responsibility theory of media – a part of normative theories - which states that freedom of press is subject to the responsibility of the society. Media should act as watchdog against government or private misappropriation of power and should subject to accountability content coverage and dissemination to the public. If we consider the role of media in the direction of Persons with Disability (PWDs), today media is found urban-based and biased, class-oriented, market and advertising driven, leaving less space/slot for socio-economic issues pertaining to the disabled. The coverage of disability issues in media, especially in Hindi cinema occupies the least and, hence, human rights activists have hammered the cinema on the anvil of public interest.

Methodology

The current study has employed the secondary data by using various books, journals and portals of repute related to the Bollywood movies.

The study has employed the discourse analysis to examine the disability representation in the Bollywood movie My Name is Khan (2010). Owing to have critical understanding of the subject for discussion, various dialogues in verbal modes and non-verbal portrayals in various styles of the disabled character have taken into account. Various discourses, writings, conversations, communicative events have carefully analysed pertaining to disabled character starring by Shah Rukh Khan as Rizwan Khan in the film.

My Name is Khan: A Film on Disability

The Bollywood cinema and Shah Rukh Khan are found in exploring the Asperger syndrome, plaguing the human mind in My Name Is Khan (MNIK). Produced by Hiroo Yash Johar and Gauri Khan and directed by Karan Johar, MNIK is the first ever-Indian film which was distributed by FOX Star Entertainment. The film has adopted Roadblock advertising technique to market a film. After running successfully, Karan Johar, Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol bagged the Best Director, Best Actor and Best Actress respectively of 2011 Filmfare Awards(www.dnaindia.com, 2011).

Findings and Analysis

My Name Is Khan, a film made with sincerity and sweat, ambition and conviction revolves around the character Rizwan Khan starred by Shah Rukh Khan. Rizwan Khan,a Muslim man from India, moves to San Francisco to stay with his brother and sister-in-law. He is a man with Asperger syndrome, who is mistaken to be a terrorist while travelling in the US. The film is of drama and romance genre and has three major dimensions - Love Story, Islam and Asperger Syndrome.Asperger syndrome, milder form of autism impairs Rizwan's social communication skills and gives him some decidedly odd behavior patterns. He cannot stand before loud sounds or the colour yellow and he rotates stones obsessively. He is married to Mandira starred by Kajol. After 9/11 blast, their happy family falls apart because of his 'Khan' tag. Therefore, he decides to meet the US President to tell the message 'My name is Khan, and I'm not a terrorist.' After long struggle, he meets the President and sends the message. Later his family gets reunited where the triumphant story of an unconventional hero overcoming obstacles has portrayed productively on the silver screen.

One popular dialogue in the film is "My name is Khan, and.... I'm not a terrorist". This dialogue seems simple, yet is the base of the film. The whole film revolves around this theme. It tells the religious differences prevalent in the US. Anotherdialogue is "Meri ammi kaha karti thi ki duniya me sirf do kisam ke insaan rehte he, ek accha insaan aur doosra bura insaan...... Mein accha insaan hoon, mein acche kaam karta hoon" (My mother used to say that there are only two types of people in this world. Good people and bad people. I am a good person, I do good deeds).The striking dialogue "Ho sakta hein ki aap logon ko mein thora alag lagoon, lekin iska matlab yeh nahi ki mein pagal hoon, me bohut intelligent hoon...Very Smart..."(You may feel that I amlittle different from others, but that does not mean that I am mad, I am very intelligent...Very Smart!). Another dialogue based on confidence and faith "Physics ki ek entertainment theory hein jiske mutabik kuch khaas awazon se dil ki dharkanein aur bhi tez ho jati hein.......mere liye to Mandira woh awaaz hamesha tumhaari hasi ki he..." (According to an entertainment theory in Physics, our heartbeat increases when we hear some special sounds. For me Mandira, that sound will always remain of your laughter). All above-mentioned dialogues foster positive attitude shown in the film despite his mild autism. In addition, his character is found strong, determined and undeterred even though he suffers from disability symptoms.

When the film is looked into from the perspectives of disability, some positive aspects are found. Those aspects are inspiring and motivating. In the very beginning of the film, Rizwan's mother praises and guides him even though she is not aware of the Asperger's symptoms and behaviours. Some of the scenes on Rizwan and her mother indicate that a disabled can do wonders if they are properly guided. The film also argues they can take care of themselves and can be differently-abled. In fact, his brother Zakir's wife Hashina, who is a professor in Psychology, detects his disease.

In one scene, Rizwan's brother encourages by speaking "I got success, because I worked hard. Now it's your time to work hard". The scene underlines that disability persons have equal potentialities and they can succeed too. This film is issue-based, not hero-based. Heroism is underplayed and the magnitude of heroism has justified. Even though superstar Shah Rukh Khan plays the role of the disabled person, he is not found as extra-ordinary person. Thus, it has paved the way for realistic representation of the protagonist who suffers from mild autism. The film also says how to handle the disease, not the problematic aspects. The grammar of dialogue in the film is good and narration of the story is up to the mark. The dialogues like 'Hum Honge Kaamyab' fosters positive attitude among the viewers. In the film, even though he is a disabled person and previously tagged with 'Terrorist', he saves hurricane-hit Georgia people and proves as a Samaritan. Finally, he meets the US President and says 'My name is Khan, and.... I'm not a terrorist'.

Despite several positive aspects of the film, it has some shortcomings in approach and representation of disability character. First, the film may not have clicked, if Shah Rukh Khan and Karan Johar were not associated. First half of the movie is somewhat real. The second half seems little superficial in which he meets the President. Question often pops up how a common person could meet the President. Heroin Mandira or sister-in-law Hashina guides to Rizwan all the time. However, after the interval, he is found all efficient in all respects. Practically it is not possible. Thanks to the director's fancy approach and sympathetic attitude like all others to portray on the silver screen.

An emotional dialogue "Bas kuch kuch baatein hein jo mujhe samajh me nahi aati....jaise kesi ke ghar jaon to log kehte hain Aao Rizwan, issey apna hi ghar samjho" Kaise samjhu, jab mera ghar nahi hey to?" (I do not understand something like how I can take others' houses mine. Come Rizwan, accept it yours. How to accept if it is not mine?) is somewhat weakensthe disabled character. The character of the disabled has underplayed, if this dialogue is taken into consideration.

Suffice to say, religion and caste based films run well and make box-office hits in India. So in this movie, religion has taken the driving seat, leaving disability a back seat. Religion has dominated the disability theme. The word 'Khan' has pronounced frequently than 'Asperger'. Songs sound pleasant and sequential. However, it may not be feasible for a person who suffers from many problems, not autism alone. The romance between Rizwan and Mandira is found designed and mawkish. Asperger, a form of disability is recognized late in India. In order to create the sense of surprise, sympathy and panicking among the cine-viewers, the protagonist is found with such kind of disability.

However, it is also found that there is a transition in portrayingdisability character in terms of tone, voice and theme from the film *Koshish* (1972) directed by Gulzar to movie *Barfi*! (2012)directed by Anurag Basu. Somewhat directional perspectives have changed from sympathetic to empathetic. However, it is of late and in lesser magnitude. Last not the least, the medical and charity approach have transformed to rights approach towards disability which is a laudable attempt from the Bollywood industry and the Indian society as well.

Suggestions

The fight and advocacy to ensure disability citizenship will not be a distant dream if media, particularly Hindi cinema plays a justifying role in this connection. Movies should not just to pass on the information on disability issues. Being an agenda setter for the future discussion, media should keep certain priorities based on the emerging issues like inclusive development and accessibility, Information Communication and Technologies (ICTs) and social security.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), the statutory body under the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in consultation with organisations working for disability should chalk out a uniform policy and programmes for the production and direction of films as well. The concerned policy should speak of the modus operandi to determine what kinds of characters to be visualized in terms of theme, form, tone, and language. Cinema should show the people with disabilities as active participants and connect to various lives of mainstream society by bridging the gap between the disabled and non-disabled society. However, these representations should not mere turn into celebratory stories of will power and determination.

In addition, the CBFC should properly review, rate and censor motion pictures, television shows, television advertisements, and promotional materials pertaining to the issues of disability. It is also recommended that mainstream Hindi cinema along with regional cinema industries should take up the cudgels for the proper representation of differently-abled persons on the silver screens, attempting to usher in a new era in the society.

Last not the least, there should be people's movements to galvanise the spirit of rights movement for the disabled in the field of health, education, accessibility, employment and active political participation. They should infuse the message that the national developmental cannot be possible, if disabled persons are excluded from the mainstream. If there is a support for the disabled society, it shall pave the way for their participation in social, cultural and political spheres.

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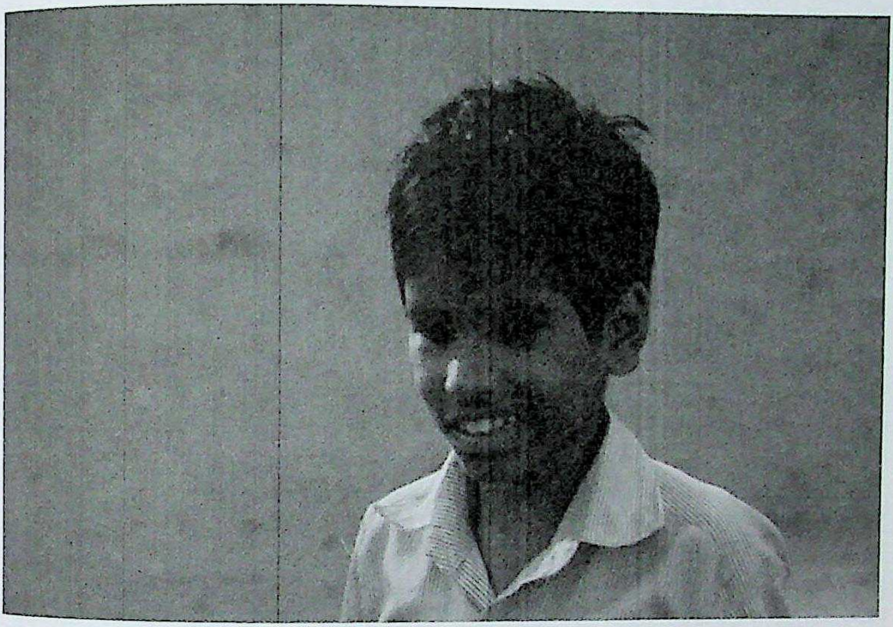
Appendix 1

CC- am Digital Preservation Foundation,Chandig S-Mo 25-Grant



Chapter 9

Children, Human Rights and Media in Indian Setting

Dr. Suman Kumar Kasturi & Prof. P. Bobby Vardhan

Abstract

Mass media have the immense capability in promoting various issues related to children's rights. Though the Convention of the Rights of the Children and the Constitution of the Republic of India guarantees many rights to the children of India, all those have become mearlyguidelines confined to books and policy files. The media is capable of promoting the children specific issues. But, in the contemporary Indian scenario, the media have just turned to be mere informers of the incidents and do not go beyond that. This chapter deals with all issues related to Children, Human Rights and Media in Indian setting; and also proposes an action plan for communicating the children's issues.

Keywords: Children's Rights, Human Rights, Mass Media, India, Indian Constitution, Satmass media

Introduction

Human Rights have become central to the insight of present day society. They have become important political instruments for the denunciation of concerned governments. Human Rights as a whole and children's rights in general are a central bee in the bonnet of a medium which wants to alarm the public. The Convention of the Rights of the Child lays stress upon the role of the media in children's lives, avowing children's right to freedom of expression (Article 13) and to privacy (Article 16). It also lays conscientiousness upon governments to ensure that children have access to as wide a range of information as possible (Article 17) (Sharon Detrick, 1999: 557).

International development institutions emphasise the decisive magnitude of the mass media in the enhancement of encouraging a public attitude to human rights issues. The role of mass communication channels in promoting human rights education is well recognised and documented. Most of the eminent scholars of mass communication argue for sizeable media mobilisation in contributing to the human rights agenda, specifically the promotion of children's rights. The media plays a very powerful role in the lives of all children and young people, shaping as it often does the views of society towards them (Denis McQuail, 2010: 557).

At present, the children in India suffer a lot everywhere from detrimental cultural practices and conceptions which enjoy more authority than norms of international children's rights (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights-human/). Also, if we deeply look into the Indian scenario, the media plays a portion of its role limited only to inform the masses about the happenings; whereas, in uprightness the media is expected to perform other roles as well. At this juncture, there is a need for the mass media to take up this issue seriously for campaigning for the better practices of the children's rights so that the very purpose of guaranteeing of children specific rights by both UDHR and the Constitution of Republic of India would be meted out.

Statistics on Children in India at a Glance

In order to understand the current status of children's rights in India, it is very much essential to have factual information on the same in hand. The statistics of the children in India reveal the following most critical facts:

- India is home to 400 million children considering that children constitute over one-third of India's population of a total of 1.21 billion people (Geoff Hiscock, 2008: 58).
- Every sixth child in the world lives in India (A.C. Fernando 2011, 78). Also, out of the 400 million children in India every second child is malnourished i.e. One in every three malnourished children in the world lives in India, (Statistics on Children in India 2014).
- The child sex ratio in India is at the lowest with just 914 girls for every 1000 boys.
- In India 47 out of every 1000 live births do not complete their first year of life.Also, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India is very high at 212 per 100,000 live births (Ibid).
- National Dropout Rate at the Elementary Level in government schools in India is over 40%. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the Secondary

Level in government schools in India is below 50%. About 35% children in India with disabilities remain out of Elementary school. The School dropout rate amongst adolescent girls in India is as high as 63.5% (Ibid).

Indubitably, the above facts reveal that so many national and international policies and the constitutional guarantees of India aimed at the protection of the children's rights have been just confined to policy files and books - and simply gathering dust. The statistics also affirm that the children are accorded a low priority in national policy and governance decisions. This turns to be a serious problem of the times - and the need of the hour is to ensure timely action so that the mentioned policies and constitutional guarantees might be implemented both in letter and spirit. The vacuum created in this milieu can be only filled with the media and there is no other swapon hand for the same.

Role of Mass Media in addressing Children's Issues

It can be seen that media professionals are recognised as having a vital role to play in social mobilisation around the rights of children. They may be involved primarily as reporters of the misdemeanours and faux pass of others, but they are the medium on the other hand. As watchdogs in the public interest and promoters of autonomous exchange they have a divergent role in the process of recuperating the image, rights and prospects of children (Mike Jempson & Bill Norris, 2011: 4-5).

The major stumbling block for the journalistic practice is that the journalists operate in an increasingly business-related environment. Children have a worldwide appeal, and, in theory at least, are relished in every civilization. Also, they make up an imperative section of growing advertising and consumer markets. Threats to children engender poignant responses which can be strapped up to incarcerate the audience. It follows that there is always a risk attached to the stories and images pertaining to the children. Such stories go on par with the much valued stories of social nuance. As far as the Indian media is concerned, children are often represented as victims, desperadoes, or as endearing connections to grown ups.

A media person who looks to attempt stories about children or to illustrate a conviction, they need to have adequate information about the concerned issue. Such awareness includes valuing the rights of the children involved – their right to security, their right to freedom of speech and knowing about the laws and conventions that exist to protect them, and being free to investigate any infringement of those rights.

Other than a few specialists in the field, many journalists in India hardly have a detailed knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of the other allied guarantees specific to Indian children. Clearly, if media professionals are to become more dynamically engaged in the protection of the human rights of children there is a need for the development of a line of attack it deserves.

A particular area of concern that needs to be addressed is the access which children have to potentially harmful material, including the portrayal of violence, sex, and sexualised images of children. While controversy may continue about the extent to which such material directly influences the behaviour of children, it should remain a priority among media producers to ensure that children are not ill-treated or otherwise put at risk by easy access to material, including imagery that appears to condone or give confidence to violence or inappropriate sexual activity (Imtiaz Ahmad, 1999: 33).

Another need is to give attention to the issue of media literacy among children and to their active engagement with the mass media. Children are consumers of conventional media products as well specialist publications aimed directly at juveniles. In many countries including India the mass media, and especially television, play an increasingly important role in the education of children. They deserve to understand that the mass media is an 'edifice' of the wider world rather than a simple reproduction of 'actuality'.

Also, the media professionals have a key role to play in building effective media literacy programmes within schools, as well as a vested interest in guaranteeing that future generations make out the value and come to trust the mass media as a source of steadfast information. Media literacy will also boost the vested commercial interests of the media, as well as encouraging the development of future generations of capable media professionals.

Succinctly, central to the aims of work in the field of child rights and the media must be opportunities for the voices of children to be heard. Media professionals need to hear what children and young people think of their products, and especially media representations of childhood in all its facades. Children themselves have a fundamental contribution to make to the debate as consumers of mediaas contributors to the publishing process, and to the future of newspapers in particular (Ibid).

Communicating Children's Rights Using Mass Media

Mass Media can perform their role in promoting Human Rights specific to children in different ways. It can make people aware of their rights, rendering its violations and focus attention on people and areas in need of the fortification of the rights and follow their case till they achieve them.

Media can also give publicity to the individuals and organisations, which are engaged in securing human rights. This will encourage as well as inspire others to do the work akin. Media can inform and educate the people of their rights and put forward ways and means by which they can solve their problems and thus empowering them to protect their rights (SS Jaiswal 2012, 26).

Since the media play the role of communication between the authorities and the public, it can also play an effective role of making the authorities aware of their duties. Media research and media planning should be undertaken in accordance with the mind-set of the target audience. These could shove campaign objectives, measure the effectiveness of mass media programs, provide the information most relevant to the efficient use of mass media, and broadcast programs on child centric subjects.

Targeting the communication by groups can often be crucial to increasing awareness. Therefore, the most appropriate media needs to be selected for each group of audience. There is often little statistical difference of awareness of children's rights between different communities, so selecting particular groupings can be difficult. However, the fact that there is a general low level of awareness does mean that some approaches may be as useful across the whole population. Children's Rights protection policies and measures could also be incorporated with other human rights issues and the policies middle-of-the-road. Suppleness in policy making should be maintained innovatively to deal with ambiguity. The key messages a communication strategy concerning children's rights should include:

- Everyone has a role to play - a role by enhancing their contribution to children's rights protection.
- Children's rights protection will impact everyone - everyone needs to adapt.
- Important public relations activities such as those appended below are very important while communicating the issues related to children using the mass media.
- Engagement of the audience fully, in activities of children's rights protection and related fields.
- Offer trust worthiness through approval of third parties, by way of diffusing success stories.
- Attract media attention, thereby promoting the project.
- Display commitment to all stakeholders through demonstrations.
- Create and maintain decorum in the eyes of the stakeholders.

A key part of successful promotion lies in knowing the most effective channels of mass communication to reach the target audience. The pros and cons of the available options have to be considered, well before media planning is done.

The mainstay approach should be to target press, radio, television and the Internet to reach households and businesses in all societies. The priority of the communication is to motivate simple changes needed to be done, in order to protect the children and their rights. The mixed media of visual press, aural radio, and audiovisual television can be used to convey a variety of messages and stimulate to action in different ways. All media usage needs to be cost effective in their reach of the target audience and the communities as a whole.

The target audience for the communicated messages through various mass media are varied and dissimilar. Keeping in view of this fact, the programme designing is required to be planned. Among all the conventional media, Television has in an important role in communicating children issues. Radio broadcasts, especially on local stations are both more inexpensive and can be used to target more specific audiences like agrarian societies. Many surveys indicate that the public do like to receive information via leaflets or pamphlets. They are also relatively inexpensive to produce and provide. Posters in particular are suitable for placing in public places. There are however, sustainability questions surrounding the publication of excess numbers of leaflets. Due to the increase in availability of the access of the Internet, the ability to provide up-to-date and creative information has become a reality. The Satmass media[1] (Suman K Kasturi, 2013: 183) has especially proven to have an impeccable impact in informing the masses of various issues. A website can have lower cost advantages and can act as a primary focus for campaigns and a source of contact for the target audience.

The target audience for various mass media in the context of diffusing information related to children's rights factors is shown in Fig 1.

Action Plan for Communicating Children's issues

The action plan for communicating the children's issues involving mass media is proposed in the following five stages:

Stage 1 → Preparation
Stage 2 → Evaluation
Stage 3 → Understanding & Action Planning
Stage 4 → Implementation
Stage 5 → Re-Evaluation

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[1] Satellite media and Mass media

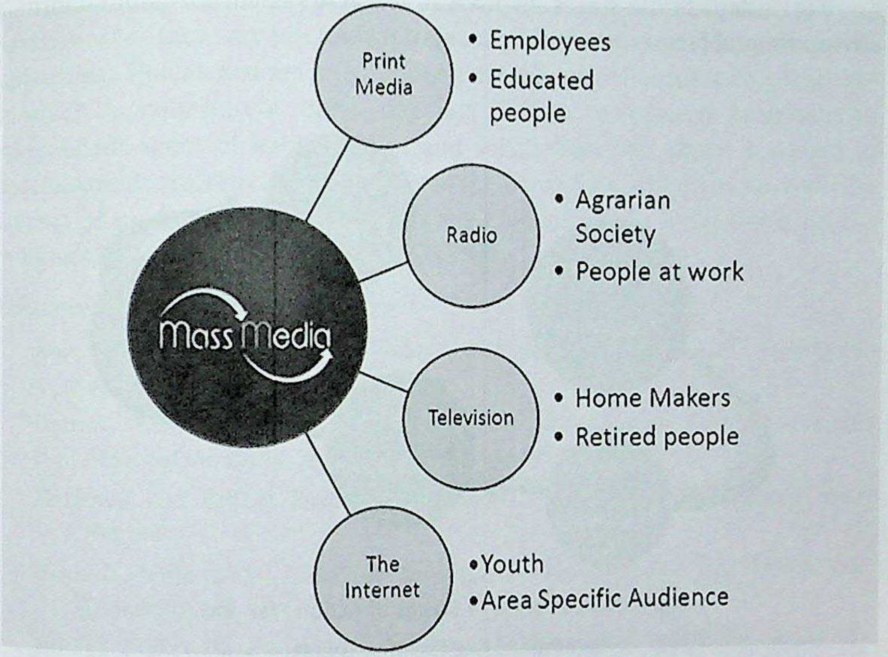
Print Media
• Employees
• Educated people
Radio
• Agrarian Society
• People at work
Mass Media
Television
• Home Makers
• Retired people
The Internet
•Youth
•Area Specific Audience

Fig. 1 Target Audience of Various Mass Media in Diffusing Information about Children Issues

(*Source*: Personal files of authors)

- *Stage 1-Preaparation*: At this stage, the media message and media design are required to be chalked out depending upon the target audience and the message for communicating the issue of Children Rights.
- *Stage 2-Evaluation:* In this stage, the considerations for communicating the children specific issues using various mass media channels are to be evaluated, perfectly in all viewpoints.
- *Stage 3-Planning:* All intricacies involved in the process of communicating the related messages through mass media and other associated areas are required to be understood thoroughly, before an action plan is made ready.
- *Stage 4-Implementation:* In the fourth stage, the plan developed in stage 3 is to be executed, taking into account of all the guidelines.
- *Stage 5-Re-Evaluation:* In this last stage of the action plan, the results are required to be re-evaluated. In case of any modifications required, all stages are to be repeated until the desired results are achieved.

Fig. 2 depicts the stages involved in the action plan for communicating environmental factors as a cyclic process.

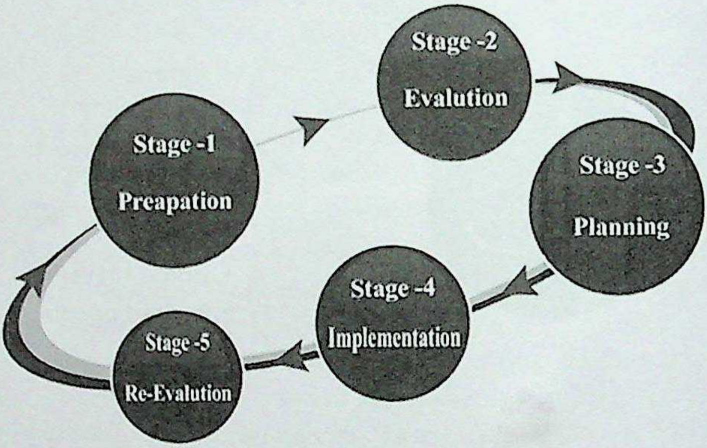

Fig. 2 Cyclic Process of Stages of Action Plan for Communicating Children Issues

(Source: Personal files of Author)

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the present time we live in is a media-obsessed era. Given the huge numbers and formats in media, post-globalisation, opportunities to raise issues and encourage interactivity have grown at a never-before rate. But even as children appear more and more in news coverage, their voice finds little or no representation. News reporting that ignores child rights often further exacerbates the injustice towards them.

Journalists have the power to change the way children's rights are perceived and enforced in the country and so have a duty to educate themselves on the various aspects of child protection issues before they bring out news in the media. Media persons should not get carried away by the whims or emotions and not fall into the trap of demonising juveniles. Instead of simply focusing on children as victims of abuse, the media must also play a role to portray children as witnesses, friends, neighbours who have a voice of their own. The child rights don't get enough space and are not taken seriously enough in media houses.The media organisations should not stick only to those guidelines, like those suggested by the International Federation of Journalists, but can also develop guidelines of their own within the boundaries of ethics.

Though there are many acts and policies in force concerning the children's rights, most of them are not known to most of the people, including the media authorities. The lawmakers must understand the nature of complex social ties on which the cohesion of society depends. The law has come to be seen as an independent agent of social change and social direction. There is a need to disseminate the information tolerably to the concerned else it's of no use!! The support of media should be taken by the government to focus much on the children's rights for their effective utilisation.

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Section III

MEDIA AND GENDER

Chapter 10

Role of Media in Protecting the Rights of Women in India

Prof. B. Balaswamy

Abstract

This chapter explains the contribution of media in protecting the rights of women from the inception of modern mass media in India. In the first phase, newspapers fought against Sati and protected the women's right to live. Subsequently, newspapers campaigned for the widow remarriages, women's education, abolition of child marriages and polygamy. Radio sought to empower the women through various educational and developmental programmes. Various films endeavored to sensitize the people about the gender relations. In recent years, new media's role is also significant in protecting the rights of women. An attempt has been made to cover all these aspects in this chapter.

Key words: Rights of women, social reform, violence against women, and women in media.

Introduction

Women constitute about half of the population in society. The overall progress of the society is possible only when women are also in good condition. In recent past India witnessed women in very high positions, including the President of India, Speaker of Lok Sabha and leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha. This kind of change did not take place overnight. Many people contributed and dedicated their lives for protecting the rights of women, even when there was no awareness among people about human rights. Women's right to life, adequate food, dignity, knowledge, equality were affected by social evils – Sati, widowhood, child marriages, polygamy and denial of education to women.

Social reform movement was started to eradicate these evils and to protect the rights of women. Newspapers were used by the social reformers to fight against the social evils. In the beginning this fight was to abolish Sati practice, subsequently for widow re-marriages, abolishing of polygamy, women's education, abolition of child marriages, health rights and for the empowerment and equality. The emergence of different media-print, radio, television, films, and new media and the entry of women into media also facilitated media's contribution to the protection of women's rights.

Position of Women in Nineteenth Century

In the beginning of nineteenth century, social conditions were depressing. The most distressing was the position of women. The birth of a girl was unwelcome, her marriage a burden and her widowhood is inauspicious. Attempts to kill girl infants at birth were not unusual. Those who escaped this initial brutality were subjected to the violence of marriage at a tender age. Often the marriage was a device to escape social ignominy and, hence, marital life did not turn out to be a pleasant experience. Eighty years old Brahmin in Bengal had as many as two hundred wives, the youngest just being eight years old. Several women hardly had a married life with worth the name, since their husbands participated in nuptial ceremonies for a consideration and rarely set eyes on their wives after that. Yet when their husbands died they were expected to practice Sati which Rammohan Roy described as 'murder according to every shastra'. If they succeeded in overcoming this social coercion, they were condemned, as widows, to life- long misery, neglect and humiliation (Bipan Chandra, et.al, 1989). Newspapers played a significant role in protecting the rights and over all upliftment of women in India.

Raja Ramohan Roy's Fight Against Sati

Women's right to life was affected by an orthodox practice, Sati Pratha. Sati literally means 'a pure and virtuous woman'. Sati Pratha or tradition of widow burning at the funeral pyre of her husband has been a shameful social evil and an age old practice in Indian society. A widow was burned either with her tacit consent or most of the times forcefully by her in-laws after the death of her husband. This practice shows a dark and evil side of Hindu society, especially of ancient and medieval India. The practice was mainly associated with the so-called high castes (Brahmin and Kshatriya) in the early history. According to one version it became fairly wide spread during the Muslim period when invasions and conquests played its role and it was considered necessary to preserve the honor of Hindu women. However, there are evidences to show that the practice of Sati was also there in western and southern India even before the advent of Muslims. Gradually, the practice was adopted by the so-called lower castes in their quest to aspire for higher ranking in social order by emulating the customs and rituals of higher castes. The practice of Sati was not, therefore, peculiar to one caste or one region of the country and we find evidences across the spectrum of the contemporary Hindu society (Namit Srivastava).

Several sane and educated Indians began to question this inhuman practice of Sati despite the opposition and pressure from the religious leaders. Prominent among them was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Roy is rightly considered to be the first leader of the Indian social enlightenment in the early Nineteenth century. It was Raja Rammohan Roy who urged and pressed William Bentinck to take necessary steps and declare the practice of Sati illegal. Due to his great efforts and work through publication of pamphlets and newspaper reports etc, particularly, in Sambad Kaumudi, he was able to awaken the conscience of the masses. In December 1829, Regulation No- XVII was issued by the Governor-General declaring the practice of Sati or burning or burying alive of widows illegal are punishable by the criminal courts as culpable homicide. The Regulation of 1829 was initially applicable to Bengal Presidency alone but in 1830 it was extended in different forms to Madras and Bombay Presidencies as well.

Crusade for Widow Re-marriages

Women's rights to adequate food, clothes, association with fellow human beings and the dignity were affected by widowhood. While a widower can remarry as many times as he likes, a widow cannot remarry irrespective of her age. Since child-marriages were common, position of child-widows was pitiable; their very existence or seeing their face early in the morning was considered a bad omen. The unfortunate women who could not commit or were prevented from Sati were doomed to lead the most austere life. Among the Brahmins and some higher castes, their heads were shaven, they were made to wear red or white sari without ornaments and eat single meal. Their presence at family public functions was totally forbidden. The widows slogged in joint families, died unwept and unsung (Jyotsna Kamat, 2014).

Many social reformers in different parts of India contributed to change the lives of such women. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Balagangadahra Shasthri Jhambhekar, Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh, M.G. Ranade, Kandukuri Veereshalingam Pantulu and G. Subramania Iyer were the prominent perons among them. They themselves started the newspapers and used them to change the lives of women, or they were supported by the newspapers. There were also papers which strongly opposed the changes in society. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar introduced the practice of widow remarriages to mainstream Hindu society. In earlier times, remarriages of widows would occur sporadically only among progressive members of the Brahmo Samaj. The prevailing deplorable custom of Kulin Brahmin polygamy allowed elderly men — sometimes on their deathbeds — to marry teenage or even prepubescent girls, supposedly to spare their parents the shame of having an unmarried girl attain puberty in their house. After such marriages, these girls would usually be left behind in their parental homes, where they might be cruelly subjected to orthodox rituals, especially if they were subsequently widowed.

Sangbad Bhaskar, which was brought out by Srinath Roy in 1839 in Bengal, firmly stood by the side of Vidhya Sagar and stoutly defended him against all the accusations made by the infuriated orthodox Hindus. The *Sambad Bhaskar* carried on a sustained propagamda for social acceptance of widow remarriage. It hailed the enactment of the Act xv of 1856, legalizing widow remarriage. It took much interest in the developments leading to the first widow remarriage under the provisions of the Act 1856, and expressed great satisfaction when the marriage was solemnized. The marriage caused great commotion in orthodox circles and the opposition to widow remarriage was so intense that even liberal minded men, who had earlier supported the movements, wavered and fell out leaving vidhya sagar alone to bear the burnt of all the assaults and abuses. It expressed satisfaction over the success of liberals in alleviating sufferings of the widows, The Bhaskar took this opportunity to criticize those who lacked determination in fighting conservatism. Admonishing lswar Chandra gupta for his opposition to widow remarriage the sambad Bhaskar prophesized that a journalist aught to be liberal in his outlook and firm in his conviction and unfailing in his duty to society.

Samachar Darpan took keen interest in the social questions like Kulinism, widow remarriage, early marriage and polygamy. In 19th century most of the social reform issues in Bengal centered round the amelioration of the condition of women and the *Darpan* played an important role in mobilizing public opinion in support of their emancipation. The paper published articles, Correspondence, and extracts from contemporary journals covering almost all problems concerning women. It published on March 21, 1835, a letter from the women of chinsura in which they demanded (1). Arrangement for education like the women of the civilized countries (2).Right to mix and talk freely with all like the women of other countries, (3) Discontinuance of the practice of transferring girls like cattie at a tender age and freedom to choose husbands. (4). Present of the selling of girls in the name of marriage to the highest bidder.

(5). Abolition of the practice of polygamy. (6). Remarriage of widows.

In another letter, published on March 14, 1835, a woman of Shantipur depicted the plight of the kulin girls and widows. She wrote that the Brahmin and the Kayastha widows of Bengal were denied the right of remarriage unlike the women of some other areas of the British territory. Kulin girls were not allowed to marry outside the narrow circle of Kulin families, but the men freely kept concubines and enjoyed a life with prostitutes. A woman is condemned if she courted with a paramour (illicit lover). She drew the attention of the British government to the sufferings of the widows and contended that these could be eradicated following the ancient norms of Hindu law.

Kandukuri Veereshalingam Panthulu fought for education for women, and remarriage of widows. He arranged the first widow remarriage inspite of strong opposition from orthodox groups. He started *Vivekavardhini*, to point out and criticize the defects in the society. He also maintained several other journals like *Chintamani, Satihitabodhini, Satyasamvardhani*, and *Satyavadi*. He used these publications for women's upliftment in Madras Presidency.

The Hindu wrote in 1889: "We shall advocate with all our weight and influence such social reforms as are absolutely needed to give unity and harmony to our life under existing conditions even though we know that by doing so we shall array against ourselves in powerful antagonism, the followers and upholders of orthodoxy." Among the reforms for which the paper campaigned were widow remarriage, raising the age of marriage, abolition of caste and uplift of the untouchables. The Hindu's crusade was so much out of tune with the spirit of the time that it affected its business side and the paper began to lose circulation and advertisements. Subramania Aiyer set a personal example in social reform by solemnizing the marriage of his widowed daughter in Bombay in the presence of leading social reformers of the country.

Violence against Women and Media

Puja Budhathoki, a women activist, observed, "increasing rates of trafficking and alarming increases in HIV/AIDS infection in women and children, fuelled by gender inequalities, stigmatization, violence and discriminatory attitudes, as well as the widespread use of sexual violence as a weapon of intimidation and war, amply demonstrated the continued relevance of international commitments to eliminate violence against women and the urgent need for concerted international action"(Kamala Sarup, 2005).

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines Violence Against Women as such: ' Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. Some groups of women, such as belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, female children, disabled women, elderly women and women in situations of armed conflict, are especially vulnerable to violence'.

The role of media is crucial to the issue of violence against women, both in terms of how media cover the issue, and how media may be used as a tool to help activists and governments raise awareness and implement programs on this issue. Sometimes media also contribute to aggravate the situation, by sensationalizing and showing women as attractive objects.

According to Kamala Sarup (2005), News coverage of violence against women has often been sensational, exploitative, and lacking in serious analysis of the prevalence. However, media coverage and depictions of sexual assault and domestic violence have begun to change. Even though, problems remain unchanged. Media also have a duty to report accurately on acts of violence against women. Although some in the media are to be commended for their ongoing efforts to reflect sensitive, diverse, and egalitarian images, others in the media still incorporate images that convey destructive messages. Still women's bodies are used as objects to sell products. Media should highlight injustices meted out to women by the male dominated society. Media's growing role in highlighting violence against women and stressed the need for creating awareness among the victim women about their rights, so that they could protect themselves.

Beena Sarwar, a TV producer in Pakistan, said media did play a role in combating violence against women. She referred to the Meerawala incident where the victim did not want to speak about her ordeal, but it was a local journalist who reported the incident, which was then taken up by national and international media who brought the case to the limelight and serious action was taken against the criminals.

Right to Birth and Media

Girl child's right to birth is even affected by the discriminatory treatment against girls in society, particularly, after the advent of medical technology that facilitated the identification of the sex before birth. Narrow-minded people do not mind murdering their unborn daughters for the fear of giving huge amounts of dowry at the time of her marriage. Such people, whenever they discover they are going to have a girl child (through illegal sex selection tests), get the foetus aborted. Else they would continue to reproduce till they get a male heir. Many families put pressure on women to give birth to boy so that he can take family's name forward, light the funeral pyre and be the bread earner of the family. Sadly, there have been numerous incidents of the foetus being found lying in farms, floating in rivers, wrapped up in jute bags etc. India's major social problem is the intentional killing of the girl child. The struggle for a girl child starts the day her existence is known in her mother's womb (Preeti Panwar, 2012). Crime of female foeticide is not only common in rural areas where social discrimination against women, lack of proper education etc. can be considered as reasons behind carrying out such acts, but also the ultra modern, so-called 'educated' people living in urban areas and metropolitan cities who are a step ahead in killing the girl child in the womb. Alarming reports in national and international journals claim that over the last 30 years, India has eliminated 30 million girls before their birth. In a report in 2007 the United Nations estimated that 2000 un-born girls are illegally aborted every day in India, (John Babu, 2013).

Media Coverage on Women Rights

As Preeti Panwar (2012) observed, the truth behind this crime has been brought into light several times by the print and electronic media. But, it has failed to melt the hearts and minds of those who remain unaffected by the consequences. The matter was discussed in length and breadth in the inaugural episode of the show 'Satyamave Jayate' anchored by Bollywood actor Aamir Khan. The show has once again ignited the spirited discussion on the female foeticide in the country. That episode had mothers from different parts of rural and urban India talking about the pressure and the problems they faced for delivering a girl child. Although the show is doing really well and has already garnered positive reviews from the audiences, we will have to wait and see whether the impact will remain even after the programme stops beaming into our drawing rooms every Sunday. The emotional connect which the show has successfully created should be strong enough to stop the killing of the girl child before being born.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is a human right, essential to human development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. SRH issues include death and disability related to pregnancy, abortion and childbirth, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, and reproductive tract cancers. SRH accounts for at least 20 per cent of the burden of global ill health for women of reproductive age, and 14 per cent for men. Sexual and reproductive rights are essential for a variety of reasons. Access to safe, affordable and effective methods of contraception provides women with the opportunity to make informed decisions about their lives. Family planning information and services can contribute to improvements in maternal and infant health by helping prevent unintended or closely spaced pregnancies among women. Adolescent girls are particularly at risk of complications during pregnancies. Sexual and reproductive rights can also help prevent HIV and AIDS, (GSDRC). In developing countries, high fertility rates, early age at birth of first child, and high birth rates among adolescents are closely associated with the risk of HIV infection and cervical cancer. It is also estimated that close to 70,000 maternal deaths annually (13 per cent) are due to unsafe abortions.

The mass media have excellent potential to promote good sexual and reproductive health outcomes, but around the world, media often fail to prioritize sexual and reproductive health and rights issues or report them in an accurate manner. Oronje,et.al (2011) observed that The media can play a valuable role in communicating important research findings and raising the profile of overlooked and contentious public health issues, such as SRHR, to the public, including political leaders, policy makers, and key stakeholders. Reporting of these issues is weak due to lack of interest and capacity in accessing, interpreting and using evidence by journalists, as well as lack of capacity to communicate research findings effectively by researchers. Addressing these issues is a worthwhile, yet extremely challenging endeavor that needs recourses, commitment, and patience on both sides.

New Media and Women Rights

Women empowerment is very much necessary in the nation's growth be it economically, politically or socially. The term 'empowerment of women' has become popular especially after 1980s. It refers to the process of strengthening the hands of women who have been suffering from various disabilities, inequalities and gender discrimination. The term "empowerment of women" refers to the process of providing power to woman to become free from the control of others, that is, to assume power to control her own life and to determine her own conditions. The term of "empowerment of women" could also be understood as the process of providing equal rights, opportunities, responsibilities and power positions to women so that they are able to play a role on par with men in society (Ehtesham and Anil, 2013).

All over the world, the impact of new media has been witnessed in recent years, with online platforms becoming increasingly powerful mechanisms for mobilizing popular support. India is no exception, and the media coverage of this particularly horrific Delhi gang rape case and the online responses changed the mindsets of the youth and it seems that people are no longer willing to accept rape and sexual assault as "a simple fact of life." People in India demanded change, and they used the power of modern media to make their voices heard. In Delhi gang rape case Platforms such as the Face book group 'Gang Rape in Delhi' and 'Justice for Raped Girl in Delhi' have united people in expressing their hopes for a future free from similar cases. People raised their voices through Twitter, Facebook and other new media, expressing their frustrations against the government and administration. Egyptian women have often taken to the streets to protest for their rights, the most recent case being on International Women's Day this year, but they were met by angry men who harassed and assaulted many of the demonstrators. Instead of going to the streets, the most recent Twitter and Face book campaign took to the Internet to raise awareness. The detractors on the use of social media in galvanizing people, at least online, are likely to have been put to silence after this month's "End Harassment" campaign deployed by Egyptian women's rights advocates. The use of Twitter and Facebook again showed their use in combating social ills in the country and how social media can overcome where traditional media have failed (Joseph Mayton, 2011).

Women journalists in strengthening democratic processes

According to International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) "No press is truly free unless women share an equal voice." One must not assume that by virtue of being a woman, every woman journalist automatically strives to fight for women's rights. There are many professionals who regard themselves as journalists first and women second. However, those who are actively involved in the cause of women's upliftment can surely make a difference, not only by actively encouraging more media coverage of women with more female-centric articles, but also by being more visible as reporters and covering what have been regarded to be hitherto male bastions, such as Barkha Dutt in Kargil. Whilst women are increasingly reporting and presenting the news, they are rarely news subjects. This was the finding of the Global Media Monitoring Project 2000, which involved 70 countries. The startling finding is that while women account for 41 per cent of the presenters and reporters of the world's news, they are only 18 per cent of news subjects.

The level of participation and influence of women in the media also has implications for media content: female media professionals are more likely to reflect other women's needs and perspectives than their male colleagues. It is important to acknowledge, however, that not all women working in the media will be gender aware and prone to cover women's needs and perspectives; and it is not impossible for men to effectively cover gender issues. Nonetheless, the presence of women on the radio, television and in print is more likely to provide positive role models for women and girls, to gain the confidence of women as sources and interviewees, and to attract a female audience.

Constitutional and Political Rights

The Constitution of India established a parliamentary system of government, and guarantees its citizens the right to be elected, freedom of speech, freedom to assemble and form associations, and vote. The Constitution of India attempts to remove gender inequalities by banning discrimination based on sex and class, prohibiting human trafficking and forced labor, and reserving elected positions for women. The Government of India directed state and local governments to promote equality by class and gender including equal pay and free legal aid, humane working conditions and maternity relief, rights to work and education, and raising the standard of living. Women were substantially involved in the Indian independence movement in the early 20th century and advocated for independence from Britain. Independence brought gender equality in the form of constitutional rights, but historically women's political participation has remained low.

India ranks low at 132 of 186 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 2012 released by the United Nations. One of the indicators of gender inequality in this index is the number of seats held by women in the national parliament. This is where India ranks better than some other countries that have higher rankings on the GII. India has 10.9% women in the national parliament, which is higher than Hungary (8.8%), Libya (2.6%), China (9.1%), and Malaysia (9.8%). Participation still ranks low in comparison to other developing countries' national parliaments with Rwanda at 51.9%, South Africa at 41.1%, and Vietnam at 24.2%(UNDP,2012).

There is marginal improvement in 2014 in the number of women candidates winning Parliamentary elections. In the Parliamentary election in 2009, there were 59 candidates who won the election. In the current elections, 61 women have secured seats in Lok Sabha. This is the highest ever number of seats won by women ever and comprises 11.23 per cent of the total 543 seats. The lowest ever was in 1977 when only 19 women representatives won elections. People of

West Bengal have elected maximum number of women parliamentarians. The state has elected 14 women MPs compared to seven in the 2009 parliamentary election. Mamta Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress fielded maximum number of women candidates as compared to other political parties this election. Tamil Nadu that elected only one woman MP in the last election has elected four MPs this time. Not a single woman has won an MP seat from Jharkhand, Haryana and Meghalaya (Alok Gupta,2014). This situation reflects the unequal gender representation in parliament.

Media have been showing concern about the low representation of women in parliament and state legislatures. Television news channels presented panel discussion programmes on the issue. Several newspapers published editorials and edit page articles. Social network media are also used for creating public opinion in support of women reservation bill. But unfortunately, it is due to lack of political will that women's reservation bill is not yet passed by the Indian Parliament.

Participatory Community Media

Participatory community media initiatives aimed at increasing the involvement of women in the media perceive women as producers and contributors of media content and not solely as 'consumers'. Such initiatives encourage the involvement of women in technical, decision-making, and agenda-setting activities. They have the potential to develop the capacities of women as sociopolitical actors. They also have the potential to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media and to challenge the status quo. In Fiji, women who took part in a participatory video project presented themselves as active citizens who made significant contributions to their families and communities. These recorded images improved the status of women in the minds of government bureaucrats.

Conclusion

Because of the contribution of Social reformers and press, the sati practice was abolished in 1829, the widow remarriage was legalized in 1856 and the age of marriage was raised in1891. In 19th Century, social reform was a major issue in the Indian press in general and Indian Language press in particular. It led to the growth of vernacular press significantly. Media play pivotal role in protecting the rights of women. But media coverage itself is not panacea. The protection of women's rights also depends on the education, maturity and responsible behavior of the members of civil society.

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Chapter 11

Perceptual Dichotomy of Violence on Women and Television Spectacle: A Case in Assam

Dr. P. Anbarasan

Abstract

A controversy erupted in Assam when a young woman was molested publicly in Guwahati in the year 2012. A Television channel choose to broadcast the incident live which furthered the public anger. In similar case in 2007 in Guwahati, an Adivasi woman was stripped naked in public, kicked and beaten which too was shown on TV live and the footage was repeated several times throughout the day. The state's response was prompt. Investigations and arrests followed. However, the only difference was the indifferent attitude to the actions of the broadcast media. Bitter criticism followed about the media's role in the G.S Road and prosecutions began against the journalists responsible for the act, whereas in the latter case there was hardly any debate about media's exhibition of the incident. My research question is whether media in the lines of sacred and profane differently treat bodies of women of tribal and non-tribal. The intention is not to disregard the dignity of respect for women of any section but to objectively examine how the media perceives and portrays the bodies of tribal women in contrast to non-tribal.

The paper focused on two different cases; one is about stripping of an Adivasi girl in the streets of Guwahati, Assam and the second is what was infamously called as GS Road molestation case. The first case took place in the year November 24, 2007, on a Sunday afternoon on the main roads leading to the state secretariat Dispur. An adivasi school girl who was studying in X class from Sonitpur district was part of the contingent that came from all over Assam to stage a protest demonstration in Guwahati part of their long standing demand for inclusion of their communities under the list of Scheduled Tribes. What was to be a protest demonstration organised by the All Adivasi Students' Association of Assam (AASAA) suddenly went out of control, when some members among the protestors went berserk and starting damaging vehicles and shops that came on their way. They broke glasses of privately owned vehicles parked along their routesmainly cars, and motorbikes. This had angered the local residences and once they were dispersed by the police lathichargeall hell broke loose.

The demonstrators all of sudden caught on the wrong side of the fence were women, children and men young and old chased and beaten severely with rods and sticks. There were a few casualties and quite few seriously injured. One of the victims caught on the wrong foot is the main character in our story. A tenth standard school girl who for the first time stepped out of her home town came with lots of excitement to the capital city Guwahati was trapped amidst a group of men who beat her, kicked her, chased her and stripped her completely nude in the middle of the road in broad day light. She was running for her life and for dignity on the road totally nude with so many people watching and jeering. People were taking pictures and videos as if some medieval age retribution for a grave moral felony. The girl was saved eventually by one of the bystander who gave some his clothes to help her cover herself.

Media picked up the story and flashed it across all TV channels. Some of the channels put it a loop and ran it for hours. The next day many newspapers too flashed her pictures in colour on the front pages.

The second case I picked up is about the 'GS Road molestation'. It was late evening in the month of July in Guwahati's GS road, like the main artery where most shopping malls, multiplexes, hotels, restaurants and bars are situated. A young girl in early 20s accompanied by some boys was coming out from a bar supposedly after having some drinks. Some men who were standing on the way found it unacceptable for a girl to come out of a bar along with boys late in the evening. What started as physical manhandling went on to become a full pledged molestation of hapless girl in the middle of the road by several men jostling, pulling and pushing and hands all over her body. Nobody came to her rescue though it was time of normal movement of vehicles and people on the road. What added shock to the entire episode was the presence of Televisio reporter with a camera, who had managed to uplink the visuals and telecast live over the satellite channel.

Expectedly both the above incidents sent shock waves across the region and nation. Inquiries were ordered, arrests made, commissions set up. Columns of newspaper and magazine spaces were set aside to the incidents making points and counter points across print and electronic media.

Sacred and Profane

What distinguished the two different incidents was the framing in which debates took place, while one was treated as 'us' and other was as 'other'; one as 'we' and other as 'they'; one as 'sacred' and other as 'profane'. The major point of distinction was the debate on media coverage.

The former brought in gender, humanitarian, sexual violence, tribal, and crime angles to the debate but almost missed the take on media coverage of the incident. While the latter, brought almost similar points but primarily centered on the aspect of telecasting the incident live by exploiting the plight of the hapless girl. Some of the people who were later indicted in the case included the News Live TV reporter, and also the Editor in-charge. In contrast in the former issue, the ethics of flashing it in newspapers, magazines, and running it live on television did not draw much flak.

My point is not to belittle the pain, humiliation and insult to the dignity of any of the victims, but to understand the way society and culture respond to such incidents by framing them differently. In the latter incident a picture of the Chief Minister of Assam calling on the victim of GS Road incident and handing a relief cheque to the girl was put up in his personal display board another controversy erupted drawing criticism from different organizations and civil society for revealing the identity of the victim, and the picture was instantly removed. Similarly, when a team from National Commission for Women from Delhi came to Guwahati to inquire into the incident, one of the members in the press briefing mentioned the victim's name, which came under enormous criticism and eventually she had to be dropped out of the fact-finding team. Such an awareness and sensitivity of women's issue is a welcome change in the society, but if the behavior is not double standard. It is for this reason, the tribal victim's name was in the captions of every picture in the newspapers without anyone raising one's eyebrow. On the contrary, to this day thankfully we do not know the name of the girl molested in GS Road.

In similar lines, the infamous December 16, 2012 Delhi gang rape and killing not only the victim's name rightly remained anonymous. The media gave her a new name by which the people's agitation and news reports identified her, namely, as Nirbhaya. But, after the victim had died and the parents were willing to name some of the government initiatives by her real name the media and are not willing to let go of the name they have anointed her with. This seems to be stretching the logic too much. According to statistics, in India every 20 minutes one woman is sexually assaulted, that throws up alarming figure of 72 cases a day and more than 25 thousand cases in a year in the country. Why the society does not respond to these incidents in similar way? Or why do the society respond differently to different incidents of sexual assault? While talking about these issues, the Indian state has banned the screening of a documentary titled, India's Daughter. If we examine the case deeply, we may arrive at similar justifications such as protecting the honour of the victims. But when the protection of honour is double standard, the reason is not honour but patriarchal and castiest. The patriarchal and castiest planes of gender relations in India do not work in simple and direct manner, but in complex matrices of community, religion, region, language, caste, sub-caste and so on. Therefore, while a tribal woman may be framed as other in the popular discourses, but within the tribal community some other planes of 'us' and 'them' exist.

Therefore for Delhi, the tribal woman is other, the Northeast Indian woman is other, a Dalit woman is other. For the same reason Monorama Devi of Manipur is 'other' for Delhi and rest of India. The incidents do not shake the conscience of the mainstream India.

We can understand the issue sociologically by applying the concepts of sacred and profane. Every culture starting from the primitive and continuing to the 'modern', objects, people, plants, animals, symbols and ideas carry a binary division into sacred and profane. While those that are sacred attract grave cultural reverence while irreverence to them will attract severe indictment, while profane are to be treated nothing more than an object. Therefore, the sacredness or profanity is not in the subject itself but in the culture. Thus any object or symbol can be sacred in one culture and profane in another culture. An interesting example of this dichotomy is the beefeating in India, while some sections considers cow as sacred, it is treated as profane by some other sections. In Assam, Gamoch woven cotton towel in white colour with border designs in red is a sacred symbol it is used to honour the guests and becomes part of rituals, but they become profane when usedas towels to wipe one's body. Because of this temporariness, at times they are politically used to hurt or humiliate one group by another group by defiling sacred symbols.

Therefore, there is no problem in treating woman as sacred, that way the world will be different place for all of us but the complication arises when she is sacred at one time and profane at another time, she is sacred for some, profane for others. Eventually the agency of assuming sacredness is not with the subject itself but with those who consider them as their possession. The assigning sacred and profane roles to women become a patriarchal endeavor. It is part of this endevour that goes on to protect their self respect and dignity in events like GS Road molestation or Delhi gang rape. But it is the same endeavour that goes to justify killing their own offspring in the name of 'honour killings' because the male idea of sacredness has been defiled and it cannot occupy the role they assigned any more. It must simply be eliminated without any qualms,notwithstanding the filial ties.

Similarly, because of sacredness assigned to women that is contextual, they are used to make a political message, symbol of power. The act of sexual assault of a woman by an individuals or group is not only is a violent violation of human body but also becomes a political symbol of domination. This act of domination of what is culturally considered sacred becomes the assertion of male supremacy over females within the domestic confines. In social context, subjugation and sexual violence over 'lower caste' women by 'upper caste' men, or tribal women by non-tribal men is not simply about human sexuality, but also about assertion of power and control over one group by another.

The social norm requires the bodies of upper caste women to be always treated sacred for lower caste men. Lower caste men cannot woo or fall in love with upper caste women. Violation of this norm can bring serious consequences including death. Hindu women's bodies are sacred vis-à-vis a Muslim men. Therefore, they are rigidly resisted and consequences are structural admonition. The recent controversy in India about 'Love Jihad' can be looked into using this sacred and profane framework. A genuine man woman relation can be construed as religious conspiracy to defile Hindu women, which is portrayed as a threat to the foundations of Indian tradition and culture. The media as agents of power would happily lap it up and carry out information campaign in support of protecting the sacred versus profane distinctions.

Media Spectacle

Media spectacle is another framework through which we can look at the above two cases. According to this theory events are held for media consumption. In order for an event to qualify for consumption of large mass of audience it has to be spectacular, dramatic, sensational, exaggerated and extremes and so on. Any exaggeration that is fictional and fantasy has their limitation for audience imagination, therefore media have gone for real situations and real people. These phenomena have become common place with the coming of audiovisual medium such as film, video, television and internet. There was a time when reality shows dominated the television schedules so much that events like 'Kaun Benega Crorebati?' (An adaptation of American version "Who wants to be millionaire?' was getting highest viewership. Gradually the audience excitement waned and the media comes out with bigger event, 'Kaun Benega Mahacrorebati' in which the winning amount is hiked to five crores of rupees. The event drew large audience not because it was innovate, but because it was primarily spectacular, with huge money at stake. The realities have become reality for media. They are media events only. They don't have value outside the media. Realities have now turned into hyper-reality with proliferation of smartphones and video sharing apps.

If a hapless girl is molested in public at the busiest roads and time when people still freely move around, the first thought of a journalist is not to do something in rescuing the traumatized victim, but to broadcast it live to the largest audience possible. Would it not fit into the society of spectacle theory? If a teenage girl is running for life without a shred of cloth on her body in broad day, is it not a fit case for media spectacle for the media operators?

On the other hand if spectacle was the major criteria for selecting or deselecting news, how do they deal with the concept of sacred and profane aspects? Yes, the media follows a framework to deal with such contradictions. For instance when it comes to advertising and sponsorship, the people on the marginal do not become central characters. For example in US, in a television serial, two men were seen having a conversation sitting on a bed without any reference to sex or any physical contact, yet the advertisers started withdrawing sponsorship.

In India too, it would work the same way, advertisers would not want marginalized as central characters as it would offend the majority audience. Tribals, Dalits and minorities, always have to play subordinate roles even in televised serials. They are seen as drivers, maid servants, gardeners and so on. Therefore if a tribal woman's body, a marginalized is displayed on public television they don't offend the audience.

The audience does get offended when they identify with the person, or character shown. For example some time back, a Pakistani model posed semi-nude for cover page of a popular magazine. There was uproar in that country, subsequently the model said the picture was digitally manipulated.

In the case of India, how does the society deal with the question of sacred versus profanity and hyper-real of models and film stars when their bodies becoming spectacle? Indian media be it print or television or internet most of them splash bodies of women in glossy, colour and sensual manner. There will be strong contradiction between Times Now news channel and India Times portal. While Times Now would take high moral grounds on gender sensitivity and so on, its portal counterpart degrades the same women by turning them into window display pieces.

Identification with the persons and characters on media happen at different planes. We can interpret the identification of audience takes place at three planes, one as the majoritarian dominant cultural plane where most of the audience fit and so also the cultural values and moorings. The economically and socially powerful occupy the higher plane and the marginalized occupy the lower plane, display of bodies of those above and below the middle plane do not contravene the dominant cultural norms.

Thus when film stars, models, western popular icons bodies become displayed in a sensual manner there is no social repulsion and abomination from the cultural brigade of society, Indian society in general. It was not always like this, as we would know, initially women were stigmatized for performing in cinema until their social status also went up.

Even among feminists, there is no uniform view with regard to sexually explicit material they would also draw a line between what is considered erotica and other hand what is considered pornography. While radical feminists would advocate censoring pornography as they say it objectifies women and sexual act is seen from the male's point of view reinforcing patriarchy.

The radical feminist position is best exemplified by Andrea Dworkin (1981) who, through her book Pornography: Men Possessing Women spearheaded the feminist campaign against sexually explicit material in the early 80s in North America. Dworkinanalysessexually explicitmaterialas a specific genre, which celebrates and justifies male power. She sees all sexuallyexplicitmaterialas harmful because its very existence discriminates againstwomen by representingand encoding womenas sexual objects. The woman's sex is appropriated, her body is possessed, she is used and she is despised: the pornography does it and the pornographyprovesit (Lliane Loots, 1996: 88).

For liberal feminists, censorship of sexually explicit material is another form of patriarchal power for those who wield power can easily fall into the belief that they know what is best for others. As FAC states (1990: 27) suddenly leftfeminist movement that once fought for freedom and sexual self-determinationis advocating giving power over our lives to the judges and police. Suddenly what is said about our freedom and our sexual desires sounds like the raving so of the right. Suddenly feminism is about censorship rather than opening up possibilities (Lliane Loots, 1996: 88). They contend that defining pornography as central to patriarchal power, feminists deny the possibility of women's sexuality and possibility of their control.

Therefore we must understand that 'The marginalization of women occurs not only through failure to represent their perspectives but also through failure to recognize them as independent agents, apart from their relation to men (Deborah L. Rhode, 1995).

In this context, the reporting of crimes and sexual violence has to be seen from the point of view of the victims. The purpose of reporting them on the one hand highlights the crimes and alerts the law enforcing agents to act; therefore, sexual violence is among the problems of the society that needs to be addressed by different people to help fight against the oppressors and see how they are structurally related. They also provide general warning to the susceptible sections of the society to safeguard themselves. But, on the other hand frequent and detailed reporting of violence may encourage offenders.

The cases cited above needs to be looked in this line of thinking, whether they represent the women's perspective especially the victims and treat them as independent agencies. Indian television channels devoted so much airtime to the Delhi gang rape but it fails to bring into perspective the overall scenario. In Gujarat State, 500 cases of custodial rape were registeredin 1990; in 240 of these cases, the victims were below the age of 17 years. (UNESCO, Monograph, 1993:18). Recently, an RTI in Gujarat found out the rape of Dalit women there increased 500 per cent, over the last 10 years(Parimal A Dabhi, 2015).

Rape is a common crime against women all over the world. It is grossly under reported because of the stigma attached to the victim. Even when reported, the culprit israrely apprehended; and if he is ever brought to trial, attempts are made to exonerate him bycasting aspersions on the woman's moral character. The high-risk categories are young girls(including minor girls) in squatter settlements. Another major category is that of low casteand tribal women who are molested when their community launches a struggle for its rights. Rape is used in these cases as a form of retaliation and backlash against the community inquestion. Women belonging to religious and other minority communities also become victimsduring communal riots. The army and various paramilitary forces have been offenders inpolitically sensitive areas. The victimization of women during riots is common. In rare butmuch publicized cases, middle class women have been victimized for political vendetta(UNESCO, Monograph, 1993: 4).

Rape, on the other hand, appears to be predominant among the poor,particularly in urban hutment colonies. An important category of rape is that committed by the enforcement authorities: police, army, or government officials. Riots also provokedattacks against women(UNESCO, Monograph, 1993:13).Rape as a weapon of reprisal is used commonly by the police, government officials,forest officials, and landed gentry, against tribal, lower castes, and agricultural laborers. Asfar back as in 1971, the Collector of Bastar District (State of Madhya Pradesh) hadrehabilitated 300 sexually abused women and 500 children born of such abuse, from tribal andScheduled Caste background. Thephenomenon continues and is found to be widespread all over the country. Rape in police custody is a common occurrence (UNESCO, Monograph, 1993: 18).

Conclusion

Media content plays a significant role in shaping our perceptions of what it is to be a 'male' or 'female'. It carried a set of hegemonic assumptions about human sexuality. Woman's body is treated by all the societies both in primitive societies, traditional societies, and modern societies as a sacred symbol of community's prestige. Today even before the onset of social media, social reality is construed as that happens before a camera the rest are some stories that may have or may not have happened, but do not qualify to be taken seriously.

This sort of selective perception and short-term oriented action is like 'leaving the elephant and catching the mouse'. The Indian media covered Jessica Lal and Nirbhayacases continually to bring the culprit to the book, instead of treating it as a means to an end, but end in itself.

The media audience feels a sense of relief and reassurance that 'all is well'. This approach to dealing with gender discrimination is inimical to Hindi popular film's hero revenging the villain. "Real women are much more different and more diverse than their representations in the media world. If media images were indeed a reflection of reality, 'real women would relatively rare in most parts of the real world, and black, older, disabled, lesbian, fat, poor, (Dalit), or third world women would be non-existent (Van Zoonen and Costera Meijer, 1998: 298).

Human rights are talked about in every forum but most of us treat the hundreds of thousands of abductions, trafficking of human beings merely as facts and figures for records but do not move a finger to protest it. On the contrary if someone captures police brutality on a camera, however blurred the image may be the Television channels would love to put it on loop and keep playing repeatedly and shake up the public conscious, sometimes leading to suspension of one of two people. Not many are interested to go to the bottom of the event and trace the behavior to a cultural pattern.

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Chapter 12

Media Discourses on Gender and Human Rights: Cases in India

Prof. Dr. Kiran Prasad

Abstract

The mass media have played a key role in presenting images of women and values that are contradictory in nature, by generating many myths and stereotypes about the economic and political empowerment of women. While the media present modernist and westernized images of young women as emblems of emancipation, the patriarchal discourse that reinforces male domination overrides these "progressive" images. Despite India's efforts to pursue several policies for empowering women and promoting women's rights, violence against women is widespread; the cases analysed in this paper have shown that women are subject to violence irrespective of their education, social class or public status. There is a definite bias in the gender portrayal of women in the media with women's rights not being perceived as human rights. They are held responsible for their humiliation and receive very little sympathy as victims of violence. The violence against women often leads to their disgrace, resulting in regulating or negating their degrees of freedom. Freedom to lead a dignified life is a basic human right for which women have to struggle in India. While women are rendered voiceless and bear the burden of shame, men seem to be under no such social constraints. The paper presents cases of both ordinary women and celebrities who have experienced violence, media representation of these events and analyses how they were played out against the backdrop of a nation-wide discourse on women's rights.

Violence Against Women: Negating Human Rights

The violence against women has rendered large sections of women devoid of human rights. Violence against women has had tremendous power to create a collective punishing mechanism for women; this is meant to warn them against behavior perceived as undesirable by certain sections of society. The violence against women is an integral part of their lives leading to their disgrace and resulting in regulating or negating their degrees of freedom. Poverty and difficult physical and social environments are rife, in addition to women being exposed to exploitive and abusive treatment, all of which have an adverse impact on their lives (Prasad, 2008a; Das and Shah, 2001).

Indian women marry at a median age of just 17 years and 16 percent of women aged 15-19 have already started bearing children, according to the 2005-2006 National Family Health Survey (NFHS, 2007). The age of consent is lower for women than for men, being 18 and 21 respectively. This is a contributory factor to the prevalence of child marriage, with girls marrying even before they reach the legal age of consent. India ranks among the countries with the highest maternal mortality rates; the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) in India stood at 212 per 100,000 live births in 2007-09 (Registrar General of India, 2009). In rural India, where fertility rates are higher and teenage marriages are common, women face insecurity regarding a regular income, food, shelter and access to health care and other essential services.

Gender discrimination and violence against women have had a profound effect on the sex ratio in India. The sex ratio (the percentage of female children per 1000 male children under five years of age) has been dropping steadily for the past 50 years, with a steep decline from 962 girls to 1000 boys in 1981 to 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001. In 2011 the sex ratio of females stood at 914 females per 1000 males (Census of India, 2011). The poor existing social conditions have exacerbated crimes against girls and women beginning, in many cases, even before birth, in the form of foeticide, infanticide, dowry deaths and honor killings. In Indian families, a woman's autonomy and physical mobility are restricted by various cultural traditions and practices, which pose a lifelong disadvantage. In this context, women's powerlessness is reinforced by behavioral norms grounded in a culture of honor and shame that women are expected to adhere to unequivocally. The most prominent of these behaviors are seclusion, subservience and self-denial, which have important implications for women's rights.

In India, violent inhuman practices against women are often recognized and defended as "strands of the cultural weave," for example in the case of wife-beating. The International Clinical Epidemiologists Network (INCLE undertook a multi-site study between 1997 and 1999 covering the cities of Bhopal, Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow, Nagpur, Thiruvananthapuram and Vellore in collaboration with research teams from medical colleges of these cities. They found that domestic violence is prevalent in all social settings, regions and religious groups. Nearly 50 percent of all women studied reported experiencing some kind of domestic violence at least once in their married lives, about 44 percent reported experiencing at least one psychological abusive behavior and nearly 40 percent reported experiencing at least one form of violent physical behavior. While women perceived violent behavior as "normal" in marital life, seeking help from institutions such as women's organizations, the police, mental health care or local officials were rarely reported by women. This is because such appeals for help are perceived as shameful, and the wife of the abusive man is expected to bear with it in the name of upholding family honor. Disparity in the educational level and marital age of the spouses, dowry-related pressures, unemployment, alcoholism, childhood abuse and poverty are factors found to be linked to high rates of domestic violence in India (International Centre for Research on Women, 2000).

Resistance to Rising Violence Against Women

Since independence in the mid-20thcentury, the oppression of women in India has opened up a range of questions about the constitution of gender, identity, desire, and even sensuality and material possessions. Women in India have realized that the key to their problems lies in mobilizing themselves against social forces that oppress and target them (Prasad, 2008b). For instance, the rising violence against women in North-East India led the North-East Network, Shillong, to issue a signed petition to aspiring politicians and parties in February 2003 to recognize violence against women as an urgent problem that the state must redress (Choudhury, 2004). The alleged rape, torture and murder of Thangjam Manorama Devi by security forces in Manipur sparked off a widespread, prolonged, violent, unprecedented and historic protest in that state. About 40 women, 12 of them nude, staged a protest in front of the Assam Rifles Range Office, Imphal, in protest against the rape and murder of Manorama. The women carried a banner stating "Indian Army, rape us" (*The Hindu*, July 17, 2004). This was an unprecedented expression of power in the history of the women's movement in India, which until then had conformed to traditional protest methods. This event shocked the state government, which immediately ordered all television channels not to show these visuals, as they would lead to further tension and violence in the state. Manorama's case was only one of many alleged human rights violations in Manipur. These are in fact claimed to have been sanctioned by the state in the form of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) of 1958, which gives enormous powers to security forces - to search, arrest, detain or kill anyone on the basis of suspicion alone—all in the name of "maintaining public order".

All the newspapers gave wide coverage to the nude women's protest, complete with photographs. But later reports of further protests showed no photographs of the torch-bearing women who participated in the rallies. The media found the nude protest of the women sensational, but their next protests were regarded as less newsworthy and exciting. Women's organizations, particularly the MeiraPaibi (Torch-Bearing Women), defied the unclear curfew laws and staged sit-in protests in Manipur. Manipur's Chief Minister, OkramIbobi, was severely critical of the "female vigilantes" and other non-government organizations (NGOs) for destroying government property (The Hindu, July 24, 2004). Chowdhury (2004) noted that although the state of Manipur has a long history of women's activism, the nature of the women's protest showed the depths of their desperation.

In yet another unprecedented incident in Nagpur in August 2004, a huge mob of women lynched serial rapist and dreaded criminal, AkkuYadav, and killed him on his way to a local court. When the court arrested four women for the crime, 400 hundred women volunteered to surrender before the court to secure the release of the women who were charged with the criminal's murder. If charged with murder, the four women would have had to suffer their whole lives for the shame of being convicted for the crime. But when 400 women volunteered for punishment, the court acquitted the women. Most of the media presented the incident as a "bizarre legal case," rather than focusing on the suffering and anger of the women against a legal-judicial system, which grants little justice to women affected by violence, rape and torture. However, even the women's groups themselves are divided regarding the emerging power of women to settle scores with criminals using violent means. Some regard this response as a powerful strategy that can lead to the reform of an insensitive police force and a biased legal establishment. Others believe that there is a danger that women will also be branded as criminals, if they engage in murder in order to exact justice for the crimes suffered by them. Women activists are often caught in the middle, being branded as social deviants on the one hand and projected as symbols of empowerment on the other.

Methodology

This study considers three incidents that occurred during 2012 involving ordinary and famous women who were subjected to violence and consequent shame. These incidents were covered widely in all the mass media, including newspapers, magazines and television channels. There was also widespread internet coverage and the incidents became topics of intense discussion on national forums, websites and social networking sites. The three incidents described in this study have been selected due to the fact that they were widely covered in the media as representations of the violence experienced by women in India. The present study explores how women are subjected to violence, irrespective of their personal social status and social achievements.

Treading a thin line

In the course of 2012, India was rocked by three incidents involving a sportswoman, a politician and a college student, all women who were subjected to different forms of violence resulting in personal shame. Their stories were played out in the media, which revealed their shame to the public, playing these images over and over again in a loop on television screens and provoking outrage across India. The media discourses which subjected the affected women to intense social and media scrutiny raised serious doubts about women's empowerment - even in the smallest measure - in spite of the women's movement and various statutory bodies guaranteeing women's rights. The three cases are presented here to show how difficult it is for women, even public figures, to convert their experiences of violence against them into issues that frame them in the context of freedom, dignity, identity, rights and empowerment in the media.

Case 1: The Guwahati molestation

On July 9 2012, a teenage girl in Guwahati, the northeastern state of Assam in India, was surrounded by a group of 10-15 men who stripped her and beat her for twenty minutes, as she stepped out of a club on a crowded city street after an evening out with her friends. This assault was recorded by a television crew that arrived on the scene after receiving reports of an assault. The images recorded by the television crew showed that the mob had grown to about 40 men before the police showed up half an hour after the attack on the teenage girl. After the visuals were broadcast on television channels across the country and posted on YouTube, there was an immediate demand by the public that the girl's attackers be found and prosecuted. Many questions were raised about the ethics of the TV reporter and cameraman, who were accused of doing nothing to prevent the assault on the girl. The former were even accused of encouraging the mob to assault the girl while they were filming. The two journalists resigned after questions were raised regarding the television station's recording and broadcasting of the assault footage.

The main molester, Amarjyoti Kalita, whose image was caught on the TV camera, was arrested on July 25 after intense public pressure. He was unrepentant and defended his act of shaming the girl in public by claiming that she was drunk and deserved to be assaulted. He blamed the media for blowing up the event (Headlines Today, 2012). After the exposure of the teenage girl's public shame on a major city street, as well as over the media and on internet sites, there was widespread anger over the incident and sympathy for the girl. She was even hailed for her courage in standing up to such a mob and resisting it, but the media later emphasized the fact that she had been at a pub and was drunk. This brought her into disrepute.

This incident was preceded by a similar case on New Year's Eve, 2008, in Mumbai. Two women were alleged to have been attacked by 14 men as they left the Marriott Hotel with their friends. When the police arrived, the mob assaulting the women as they lay pinned down on the ground had grown to more than 50 men. The suspects in the 2008 case are free on bail, and the case has yet to be resolved. Social norms do not approve of women drinking, visiting pubs or partying late at night, all of which can expose women to crime. If they do become victims of a crime, rather than judging it as a crime irrespective of gender of the victim, most media give a blow-by- blow account of the women, leading viewers to question the presence of women at locations that are at times regarded as unsafe for them. Men who are assaulted in similar circumstances are portrayed as victims of a crime and never viewed through a gender-specific lens, as women are.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, rape and sexual assault are the fastest-growing reported crimes in India. However, rape has a very low conviction rate, with only 26.5 percent of reported rapes having been successfully prosecuted in 2010 (Roy, 2012). As public anger grew over the Guwahati attack, the police responded by declaring that bars in the city should be shut down by 10 p.m. After a female journalist was shot and killed some years ago while driving home, Delhi's police chief suggested that women should not drive late at night without proper escorts. And after the rape of a woman in Gurgaon, a city near Delhi, some months ago, the municipal administration suggested that women should not work after 8 p.m.

These announcements were viewed as diverting attention from those responsible for crime and violence against women to the shortcomings of the public authorities in preventing such cases. The statement of Mamta Sharma, the chairperson for the National Commission for Women (NCW), asking women to dress carefully to avoid crimes (like molestation) against them sparked the outrage and disgust of women's rights activists, even bringing into question the selection process of NCW officials. Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader, Brinda Karat, demanded that the NCW chairperson withdraw her statement, or resign. She stated: "Such advice is unwarranted and militates against the mandate of the commission. It only strengthens the forces who blame victims for the crimes against them" (*The Times of India*, July 19, 2012).

Roy (2012) analyses the ongoing violent walk of shame which women are forced to tread, revealing that there is continuing tension as traditional communities and groups attempt to process the changes that have accompanied India's modernization.

> What kinds of jobs or working hours are considered respectable for a woman? Can a woman go to a bar or restaurant with friends without inviting censure or sexual advances? If a woman is out in a public area after dark, is she, to use a term that often crops up, a "loose" woman? The question of how much freedom a woman should have, and who should control that freedom, underpins the debate over sexual violence (Roy, 2012).

In many discussions of sexual assault and rape in the news media and elsewhere, the issue is often framed in relation to how far women's freedoms should extend. The discourse rarely extends to equal rights and safety, which remain just out of reach for many women across the country (Prasad, 2005; Roy, 2012).

Case 2: Sports star Pinki Pramanik

Asian Games gold medalist PinkiPramanik was arrested on June 14, 2012, after she was accused of being a male by her live-in partner, a 30-year-old woman who also alleged that she was raped by Pinki (*The Hindu*, July 10, 2012). PinkiPramanik had won the 4x400m relay gold medal in the 2006 Doha Asiad and silver in the same event at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games. She had bagged three gold medals in the 2006 SAF Games in Colombo, where she won the 400m, 800m and 4x400m relay events. She claimed to having been falsely implicated in the rape case. The court accepted the argument that the woman who had alleged that PinkiPramanik raped her had been engaged in a consensual live-in relationship with the athlete for nearly three years. Pinki was released on bail after being incarcerated for 25 days, while investigations and medical tests were completed to ascertain her gender (*The Hindu*, July 11, 2012).

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was presented in the Calcutta High Court on July 6, 2012, by representatives of civil rights groups and sports persons alleging that the athlete had been inhumanly tortured. The West Bengal Human Rights Commission also stepped in and directed the Home, Health and Police Departments to inquire into allegations of "torture" of the athlete while she was in police and jail custody (*The Hindu*, July 6, 2012). Meanwhile, a four-member team of the West Bengal Commission for Women, led by its chairperson Sunanda Mukherjee, who visited the athlete in prison, stated that there were several instances of women's rights violations. She was held in a men's prison and was escorted by male policemen, while being referred to as male in police records.

Pinki was subjected to the walk of shame, as media treatment of her case exhibited her as an object. She was subjected to multiple medical examinations, often with a voyeuristic media presence, which also carefully recorded her journeys to and from prison. What is surprising in her case is that a surreptitiously filmed video clip of one of those tests was even put online, and promptly went viral on the internet. According to Maddox (2012),

> ...the athlete was paraded before the media. From the distasteful MMS clip that went viral on the internet to photographs of the athlete being groped by the policemen - who flouted human rights laws by insisting on shoving her into a male cell - Pramanik was on display for the voyeuristic world to see.

Thus, she was put on public trial, not for her alleged crime, but due to her trans-sexual condition. So far no one has posted MMS clips of the medical examinations of the tens of thousands of men arrested each year on rape charges, nor is their anatomy a subject of discussion (Maddox, 2012). None of the individuals who made the video, the medical personnel who allowed it to be filmed and the police officers on whose watch this travesty of justice occurred have been punished or put to shame for their complicity in it.

Human sexuality has long been considered a powerful yet private sphere in which citizens can exercise freedoms, which is why political and religious oppressors have often sought to regulate and punish perceived deviance. This has held true for women who experience the walk of shame, which often takes the form of violence. In regard to Pinki's case the newspapers were filled with questions. They asked about gender: Is it a he or a she? Then they asked whether s/he was guilty: Did she rape her three-year partner? Can a person who has an unusual amount of male chromosomes, but no male organ, actually rape someone? The assault upon and humiliation of the athlete in public and in the media have served to reinforce the shame imposed on women for whom real life remains a harrowing landscape of abuse. There is also the more complex issue of the stigmatization of millions of transsexual individuals in India, which bears no relation to their personal achievements.

Case 3: Mob assaults woman political leader

On 29th June 2012, Rumi Nath, a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of the Indian State of Assam and her husband were assaulted by a mob in the hotel room where they were staying. The mob first shouted slogans, threw stones and then broke open the door of the room, dragging them out and continuing to beat them up severely for quite some time (Talukdar, 2012). The police rushed to the spot and, after providing initial medical treatment, escorted them to their residence on that same night. The three personal security officers provided by the legislature had failed to protect the member and her spouse. According to police, some people had been expressing resentment over her second marriage. Prior to this incident, on May 22, Ms. Nath's first husband lodged a First Information Report with the policeafterhis wife went missing the previous day, alleging that shehad been kidnapped. However, Ms. Nath announced on June 2 that she was not kidnapped, but was away on a holiday trip. She also announced that she had remarried, having previously filed papers for divorce from her first husband.

Although media reports cited her as living with her second husband, men are never reported in similar cases of cohabitation with wives or partners. Even though Rumi Nath was a MLA, she was viewed by the media not as a political leader, but as a divorcée. For Indian women, divorce brings in its wake many negative images and representations, to the point where divorced women are socially viewed as fallen women. A divorced woman does not enjoy any empowering representations, and she will inevitably be depicted as living a life of shame, even though she is a feminist and happily married for a second time.

Conclusion

Women are often subjected to violence due to the prevailing cultural norms and socialization patterns in South Asia in general, and in India in particular. With the proliferation of the global media in India, women are caught in an "image trap". The media discourses are framed on the backdrop of culture of aggrandizement and sexual liberation, thus complicating the question of women's rights and empowerment in India. The violence against women affects their survival and does little to ensure their human rights and build empowerment. The long-standing culture of shame imposed on women has engendered a media audience that turns violent crimes into sordid spectacles. Even famous women have to suffer immensely due to the public humiliation and negative images and identity imposed on them by the media, as can be clearly seen in the cases presented in this chapter.

Despite India's efforts to pursue several policies for empowering women, the present study shows that violence against women is widespread; the cases analyzed above have shown that women are subjected to violence irrespective of their education, social class or public status. Women's rights to live with freedom and dignity are not recognized as integral to human rights. There is a definite bias in the gender portrayal of women, media discourses often hold them responsible for their humiliation and women receive very little sympathy as victims of violence. As can be seen in the cases presented in the study, men would never be questioned as to their social behavior, while women are under constant surveillance in private and public life and violence affects women's survival irrespective of their social and economic status.India has to step up its efforts to recognize women's rights as human rights and the media have a crucial role to facilitate this journey of women's empowerment.

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Chapter 13

Role of Media in Highlighting Human Rights Violations: A Case of Tribal Women in Andhra Pradesh

Mr. Sumit Bhattacharjee

Abstract

In the present scenario, media's role in highlighting human rights violation has been significant, but it has not been able to follow up and sustain a campaign till the desired result is achieved. However, in some cases it has been selective and did run a campaign. This paper showcases the incident of Vakapalli village where eleven women belonging to the Kondh tribe were gang-raped by men of Greyhounds on August 20, 2007. It discusses how media played a significant role in highlighting the case.

Key words: Human rights, Greyhounds, Salwa Judum, Red Corridor, Cobra battalion, Koya commandos

The concept of Human Rights is as old as the human species. Different cultures from across the globe have been viewing it from different angles. Some elements of traditional cultures support the concept of human rights as wide-ranging and universally derived. Confucius, for example argued that within the four seas all men are brothers", and Buddhism believe in "Compassion for every living creature". But under political philosophy, human rights is viewed as a new way of viewing the relationship of governments and their citizens, whereby governance is intended to enhance the dignity of human beings, not exploit them. (Barash and Charles, 2002).

Gradually in modern times human rights law gained importance with the idea of protecting persons during armed conflict. The initial seed was sworn in the Geneva Convention of 1864, wherein it was discussed and decided to establish standards for treatment of wounded soldiers and prisoners of war.

Human rights gained significance only in the 20th century. The corner stone was laid by the League of Nations after World War I. However, the first major international instrument defining human rights came with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), drafted by the United Nations, post World War II. The declaration encompassed civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights.

The Second World War marked a turning point in the development of international concern for human rights. Because of the brutal suppression of the individual in Nazi Germany and Italy, the United Nations made concerted efforts to recognize the rights of the individual, and hence the concept of human rights received an institutional support. In this context, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human rights on December 10, 1948.

In tune with the international development, the Constituent Assembly incorporated Article 14 and Article 21 in the Indian Constitution. While Article 14 embodies the general principle of equality before law and prohibits unreasonable restrictions between persons, Article 21 says that "no person shall be deprived of his life of personal liberty except accordance to procedure established by law".

> Further, with the recognition that the media would play a key intervention role, the United Nations in December 1986, expanded the definition of the Universal Declaration by including the Right to Development (Bhattacharjea, (2008).

Specifically, access to education, health services, food, housing, employment and fair distributions of income were mentioned. Measures to ensure that women have an active role in development were stressed. Thus, the United Nations (1987) defined human rights as "those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to fully develop and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents, and our conscience, and to satisfy our spiritual and other needs. (Murthy and Haranath (2008). Human Rights and role of media: A Perspective)

Role of Media

Media as the fourth pillar of democracy has a role to play in bringing to the notice of the government on the excesses of human rights. Prior to Independence of the country from Colonial British rule, the local press fostered the tenets of being a free press. That the press has a role in promoting awareness of human rights, and then described as social reform, was realised long before Independence. In 1823, the noted Bengali author, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, brought out weeklies in three languages to campaign against caste discrimination and sati and for widow remarriage. Social reformers in Andhra Pradesh like Kandukuri Veresalingam followed his example. Nearly a century later, Mahatma Gandhi, the most outstanding exponent of journalism in the service of human rights, focused on the evil of untouchability but also campaigned for women's rights, basic education, prisoner's rights, community health, rural employment and other development objectives. (Murthy and Haranath (2008).

Present Ccenario

In the present scenario media's role in highlighting human rights violation has been significant, but it has not been able to follow up and sustain a campaign till the desired result is achieved. However, in some cases it has been selective and did run a campaign. One among such case was highlighted on October 11, 1980, the Delhi edition of the Indian Express, wherein it published a news item "10 under trials blame police for losing sight." It concerned a habeas corpus petition moved in the Supreme Court on behalf of under trial prisoners in Bhagalpur jail in Bihar who "alleged that the police deprived them of their eyesight by using acid". The sketchy report did not attract the notice of the government. But, on November 22, 1980 the front page of the paper displayed the picture of a blinded man under the heading "Eyes punctured twice to ensure total blindness." The news report filed by Arun Sinha, the Patna Correspondent of the newspaper, drew the attention of the people while the then Bihar Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra reluctantly ordered an inquiry. Two days later, the matter was raised in Parliament. The weeklies took up the story, and published more close-ups of the blinded prisoners, with gory details of eyeballs being pierced with cycle spokes and acid poured into them (Bhattacharjea, 2008). The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi while expressing her concern asked the then Chief Minister to take necessary action. As a result, the chief Minister suspended 15 policemen on November 30 in 1980. The expose continued with Indian Express Executive Editor Arun Shourie writing two front-page articles criticizing the administrative, police and jail procedures which allowed such atrocities to take place. The incident known as Bhagalpur blindings raises an important point that the sustained journalistic research can create public awareness of human rights. (Murthy and Haranath (2008).

But that has not been the case all through. Media did play a significant role in some select cases, beit Bhagalpur Blindings or Jessica Lal murder case (the high profile murder of a socialite in an up-market restaurant in Delhi on April 30, 1990), but in general the excesses of human rights against adivasi, has not seen as a sustained campaign.

Who are Adivasis?

In India, adivasis or tribals or girijans are said to be the aboriginals who till date have been primarily inhabiting the forest area or the schedule V area of the country (as per the constitution). A major chunk of adivasis live in the forest area of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Maharashtra. While adivasis are present across the country in different states, the above mentioned states are taken into consideration for this research paper, as this where they are caught in a crossfire between the security forces and other separatist groups and there is a huge violation of human rights, both by the security forces and the separatist groups, especially the Naxalites.

To understand their problem and before moving to a specific human rights problem and its treatment by the media, we have to gain an insight into their culture and the Naxalite movement.

The Naxalite movement initially began in West Bengal under a staunch CPI (ML) (A splinter communist group) leader Charu Mazumdar in a place called Naxalbari in West Bengal in late 1960s. It began as a political movement and later transformed into an armed struggle that believed in the doctrine of Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Tse-tung 'Power flows from the barrel of the gun.'

The movement caught the imagination of the educated youth and spread to Srikakulam and Telangana regions of Andhra Pradesh in the early 1970s. The tussle between the security forces and the naxalites has been continuing since then with either gaining grounds at certain times. By mid 1980s the security forces started to gain grounds and with the decrease in the volunteering of educated youth, the Naxalites shifted their movement to the forest areas of the above mentioned states and took up the problem of the adivasis. This strategy of the Naxalites paved way for some of the adivasi youth joining their movement, as they opined it as a popular people's movement. This changed the overall climate in the agency areas (as forest areas are otherwise noted).

As per a study by the Human Rights Forum (a premier right-based organisation) – The Naxalites, or more specifically members of the CPI (Maoist), have established themselves in the predominantly adivasi tracts of Central India. They have done this by working among the adivasis and gaining their trust through successfully fighting against various forms of exploitation and oppression that the adivasis were historically subjected to. Because the Indian state sees the Maoist movement as a threat it has essentially declared a seemingly low-intensity war on the Maoists. With the realisation that the Maoists have significant popular support among the adivasis, in order to effectively counter the movement, the State has chosen to brutalise this support base, these adivasis, to wean them away from the Maoists. (HRF, 2013)

In such a grim scenario, the adivasis who lack basic amenities such as food, water, education and medical care and are socially, politically and economically marginalised, today caught in a crossfire between the security forces and the Naxalites or Maoists (as are called now).

The HRF neither supports or advocates use of violence by Naxalites, but have been campaigning on two counts: (1) That whoever uses violence should be tried and punished only in accordance with procedure laid down by the law of the land and cannot be subjected to torture or extra-judicial execution by the state. Such acts would be contrary to Articles 14 and 21 of the Indian Constitution. (2) A political movement with a substantial social base such as the Naxalite movement should never be treated merely as a problem of 'Law and order' even if it takes to violence. It must be viewed as an expression of deep-rooted oppression in society and desperation and frustration born out of the oppression. It should be addressed at a political and social level while taking lawful precautions and punitive measures against incidents of violence. (HRF)

Case study of Vakapalli mass rape incident

Vakapalli village is located in Nurmati panchayat of G. Madugula mandal in the scheduled V area of Visakhapatnam district in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. On August 20, 2007, eleven women belonging to the Kondh tribe of the village were gang-raped by men of Greyhounds (an elite anti-naxalite force formed by the state of Andhra Pradesh to decimate the Naxalite movement).

As per reports by various newspapers such as The Hindu and The New Indian Express, about 21 Greyhounds men entered the village, as part of their combing operation, at about 6 a.m., by then most of the able-bodied men and youth were away in the fields having left as early as 3.30 a.m., as they usually do, to carry out podu cultivation (shifting or slash and burn cultivation). The women of the village were busy cleaning their homes, working in the turmeric fields adjacent to the village, at the cattle sheds and some had gone to the nearby rivulet to clean utensils or had gone to answer the nature's call.

As soon as the greyhounds men entered the village, without any provocation started raping the women who had come their way. The age group of women varied between 20 to 30 years.

A report in *The Hindu* (August 24, 2007)

> ***Raped women face social boycott***
>
> "The victims said 21 policemen entered the village around 6 a.m. while some others were positioned around the village. The men folk leave the village around 3 a.m. everyday and the policemen gang-raped them, said the victims. Some broken bangles were still lying on the trampled plants in the fields adjacent to the village, where some women were raped."

Post incident the actual trouble began, the women not only faced social boycott within the family, community and village, but even the government officials refused to accept their complaint and even tried to hush up the case. But it became an issue only after the media brought it out.

The series of events highlights how media played a significant role in highlighting the case, but failed to get them justice as required, due to lack of sustained campaign. The issue came to light on the same day at about 3 p.m. when the menfolk returned from the field and took up the matter with the local Member of Legislative Assembly, Lake Raja Rao. The MLA took the media persons to the village and it was flashed immediately. Succumbing to media pressure, the sub-collector of Paderu, asked the Deputy Superintendent of Police to register a First Investigation Report (FIR) under Section 376 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Prevention of Atrocities Act against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Registering an FIR is one thing whereas a diligent investigation is another thing. To misdirect the investigations, the women were purposefully delayed by the police for medical investigation. The incident was a gross violation of human rights and for every move the poor women had to raise their voice to get their due requirement.

A report in *The Hindu* (Sept 7, 2007)

Sparks fly over Vakapalli issue

Even as the Secretary to Tribal Welfare Department V. Nagi Reddy, sent by the State Government to inquire into the incident of alleged gang rape of 11 tribal women by the police, was talking to the 11 victims Vakapalli late on Thursday evening, Telugu Desam MLA Chengala Venkata Rao and Congress MLC K. Sarveswara Rao were engaged in a heated argument.

Later, Mr. Sarveswara Rao was detained for an hour by the villagers who were determined not to allow him to leave the village till justice was done to the victims, and the MLC had to make a hasty exit with the angry villagers in hot pursuit, according to information received here.

Mr. Nagi Reddy too was detained for a while as he concluded his visit but he pacified the villagers saying that he would submit his report as soon as possible and ensure justice to the alleged rape victims. He spoke to all the victims and some villagers and went round the village to inspect the spots where the alleged gang rape took place. He left the village around 7 p.m. after spending about an hour there.

Mr. Nagi Reddy, accompanied by Joint Collector Veerabhadraiah, Sub-Collector of Paderu D.S. Lokesh Kumar, Project Officer of ITDA (Paderu) A. Sharath and Mr. Sarveswara Rao went to Vakapalli, a primitive tribal group village located about 50 km from Paderu. Some Congress leaders also went along with Mr. Sarveswara Rao.

Earlier, Mr. Venkata Rao along with TDP's former Minister M. Mani Kumari, former MLA K. Chittinaidu and some other TDP leaders reached the village. Soon, Mr. Venkata Rao and Mr. Sarveswara Rao were locked in a heated argument. Mr. Venkata Rao's comment that the Government did not respond the way it should to the incident and his demand to Mr. Sarveswara Rao to resign as he failed to help the victims even though he was a Girijan, sparked off the heated argument.

Relay fast

Meanwhile, the relay fasts being organised by a committee consisting of political parties, students organisations and people's organisations in front of the ITDA office at Paderu since Sunday continued. On Thursday students of the local junior college took out a rally and staged a rasta rook (Road block). On Wednesday, Human Rights Forum, Mahila Chetana and other organisations organised rallies,

> rasta roko and formed human chains in which hundreds of students and others participated. State secretary of HRF V.S. Krishna asked the Government to reveal the names of Greyhounds constables who were accused of committing gang rape on Girijan women at Vakapalli. K. Padma of Mahila Chetana, MPP of G. Madugula S.V. Ramana and others participated.

Though media did its bit to highlight, many cases or rape had gone unnoticed or found a small mention in a corner of a newspaper. From 2006 to 2009, there were at least 13 major gang-rape cases committed on adivasi women by the security forces, such as Koya Battallion, Greyhounds, Salwa Judum (a force comprising adivasis but sponsored by the state of Chhattisgarh to counter Naxalites) or the COBRA battalion. And all the incidents had taken place in the red corridor area (location in the states where the Maoist or the Naxalites have fair amount of presence). And all the incidents had taken place in the garb of counter insurgency operation.

A report in The Indian Express (June 11, 2010)

> ***Where women cry for rape, but are ignored***
>
> "Going by reports, rape is a part of everyday life for the Adivasi women of Bastar and, according to many, it is used as a weapon of war. Rape as a weapon of war was recognised by the UNSC in 2008. In the Red Corridor, the predominately non-tribal police force looks at the predominately tribal Maoists as an entity of its own. There is a definite tinge of racism and rape is a form of collective punishment. The three girls raped at Mukram on May 22 were accused of being 'Maoist supporters' and alleged to have helped in the Chintalnar attack.
>
> The police have often claimed all these allegations of rape are baseless and that the Maoists motivate women to make such claims to undermine police morale and legitimacy. As it is owing to the stigma related to rape, as well as the further threat to their lives, the victim never comes forward. It took the women of Samsetti three years to come forward and even then the police didn't lodge FIRs. They would eventually harass the women, detain them, and beat them after they lodged a case at the judicial magistrate's court in Konta. The Maoists are not beyond rape either, even though they don't use it as a weapon of war."

Conclusion

The very fact that such a major incident not being investigated by CBI despite the SC Commissioner and NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) recommending it, point out that human rights violation against adivasis is not being given priority. But the initial uproar in the media did help in getting the attention and probably a sustained campaign would have brought justice to the women of Vakapalli.

The Vakapalli incident is still pending in the Supreme Court as the accused security personnel had filed a writ against, the AP High Court's order to prosecute the personnel. The media did play an active role in highlighting the incident, but after a few reports its coverage died down. This was a major violation of Human Rights and a sustained campaign would have helped the women get quick justice.

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Note

Human Rights: Rights specifying civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights for all human beings.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Many of the basic ideas that animated the human rights movement developed in the aftermath of the Second World War and the atrocities of The Holocaust, culminating in the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Paris by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

Greyhounds: An elite police commando force constituted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh state to counter the Naxalite movement

Koya commandos: A special force called the Special Police Officers recruited from the Koya tribes and raised by the Chhattisgarh State to counter the Naxalites in the state

Cobra battalion: (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) is a specialised unit of the CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) created to counter the Naxalite problem in India.

Red Corridor: An area dominated by the Naxalites in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. All the states are located in the central part of India.

Salwa Judum: (Meaning "Peace March" or "Purification Hunt" in Gondi language), was a right-wing to far-right civilian militia mobilised and deployed as part of anti-insurgency operations in Chhattisgarh, India, aimed at countering Naxalite violence in the region. The militia consisting of local tribal youth received support and training from the Chhattisgarh state government.

Chapter 14

Objectification of Women in Indian Media: A Critical Analysis

([1]*Yatr naryasthu poojyanthe tatr ramanthe devatha ...*)

Ms. Aruna Gogulamanda

Abstract

Present paper tries to look at 'the duties of media in India in the first place, the way it has been promoting degrading, sexist portrayal of women and why and how of it. The study tried to find different reasons behind this objectification of women in the media in spite of having a censor board and stringent laws to punish the perpetrators. The paper also discusses the ways and means of controlling this new and cheap tradition of degrading women in a country which boasts of treating women as goddesses.

The mass media is often referred to as the fourth branch of government because of the power it was vested upon and the over right functions they exercise. Over the years, media has proved its mettle, by being an important instrument in social change in Indian society. But in recent years, it has been observed that media has become very exploitative in re/presenting women. For the last three years media is playing the pivotal role in portraying women as commodities and as objects of sex in an excessive manner and seems to trying to set, circulate this image of women as being very normal. The word 'woman' now has become synonymous with commodity, body and beauty. Words like 'beauty', 'good looking' are replaced with words like 'sexy and 'hot' and all the women alike are falling preys to these type casts and trying their best to fit in to them. It was actually taught since our childhoods that India is a country where women are respected. The shlokayatrnaryasthupoojyanthetatrramanthedevatha..."A phrase from Manu or Manava Dharmasashtra, which says that "goddesses reside where women are worshipped".(The same Manu, in the later pages told how to control, ill treat women, too, but that is not relevant here). India in the past, was not a country which celebrates 'self', like the Western countries, that celebrates individuality and self. Our country was built more upon family togetherness rather than celebrating every small achievement. The joint family culture, treating parents and elders equal to Gods, serving the older people of the family with reverence, is almost not seen anywhere else in the world.

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[1] ..taken from Manav Dharmasashtra, which means..Gods love to reside the place where women are respected

Over the years with the rise of globalization which could successfully make people earn money easily with the bourgeoisie way of thinking, "celebrating self" has slowly become a part of Indian society, too. As a result, the business class casted played cheap tricks to earn easy money by using "women and their bodies" as capital, to which every one ended up being victims, including women themselves.

The mass media in India which is pacing speedily towards an advanced country status has been equally influencing the society through its print and electronic media. The magic media does not seem to show/present simple normal looking women as achievers at all. It has been proclaiming through the ads and shows that only fair and good looking women can receive chances of development and success. Certain fairness cream shows a young girl who remains unsuccessful in spite of being talented because of dusky complexion but she achieves success at once she uses this fairness cream. There were heart touching ads in the past like "Bajaj ad, Asian paints, Amrithanjan and so on. which were so good to watch which never needed a woman's body to sell their products. The growing up Teenagers and young women who aspire of building their careers are relentlessly trying to make themselves fair and slim as they hate their natural duskiness (which is very normal for an Indian) as being ugly. Almost all the desi[2] images are replaced by Western, fair skinned people, be it the regular programmes on health, sports, fitness or apparel or ads. Indian out fits are being replaced by Western and celebrities sport them 'very comfortably' to events and functions which the younger generation try to imitate and go on crash diets to become slim so to fit in to those out fits which were generally intended for Western people who are majorly thin and tall unlike us.

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[2] Our own, Indian.

Women in Television

The magic pervasiveness of its visual presentation and its admitted superiority over other media for propagation social and economic objectives has together placed the television of India with great priority. Right to information, revolution of information in its truest technical terms in India is the latest phenomenon. Economic liberalization in the past half decade changed the overall scenario of media tremendously. No channel tries to explore the different kinds of oppression, exploitation women of this country have been going through even in this century which boasts about women empowerment and respect.

Burning issues like female infanticide, sexual abuse of girl child, domestic violence, honor killings, cyber crimes on women, and continuous moral policing of women which really need to be focused on, will hardly find any place in the both print and electronic media today. But there are number of serials that meticulously sketch women characters as villains who always conspire about how to poison their daughters in law or as who continuously think of spoiling someone's life. Either it is serials in the vernacular or national channels; the goal seems to be the same. The female characters are portrayed as those who are caught up in extramarital, pre marital, post marital affairs or as individuals who are jealous to the core or as who does not have minimum moral values or as who are always fall for flattery. Type casting women as greedy for money and jewelry or as those who can go to any mean extent to get back their lovers or husbands who flirt with someone else happily, or as individuals with double standards or super women who does every task under the sky single handedly with a beautiful smile impressing everyone around, is what is happening in the serials today.

A recent (Airtel Smartphone) ad shows an empowered woman who is a boss to her own husband at office and a perfect wife who cooks meticulously for her husband and awaits him. How many of our women can do this...? " who has to cook at home, wait for a bus, travel in it standing throughout, work till evening and wait and travel in a bus and reach home around eight to again cook and put the kids to sleep?"And how many Indian husbands who take, have been taking helping his wife in the kitchen and sharing children's responsibility as 'low' and 'disrespectful', will do as shown in the ad? This is called type casting and making women fall preys to the "superwoman"syndrome. Not every woman is a boss and has a car, these kinds of portrayals, too, doing their share by burdening women to fit in to those stereotypes.

The rising number of Western inspired reality (dance, adventure)shows like Big Boss,KhatronkaKhiladi and JhalakDikhlaja[3] are very good examples of this. These shows, though, claim themselves as reality shows which target the hidden talent of aspirants, we don't find not even one participant who come from a poor middle class back ground. In shows like big boss, only selected celebrities have room for and not everyone. Those rich and high class people who doesn't mind to flaunt their bodies and exhibit themselves with their male counter parts with lot of ease and project it as that is so normal to behave so, find place here, which is a stunt to increase their viewership and make money. If the money minded producers want still more steaming hot scenes on the show, they don't even hesitate to invite celebrities like porn stars or adult movie actors to the show even from other countries, as guests. Here, either the producers of the shows or the participants do not think about the after effects of these shows on young and innocent minds of the country who would surely get ignited towards wrong side and we see the results of that in the rising number of rapes and sexual abuse on women. Also, God alone knows how shows like this successfully get the permission from PrasaraBharathi and govt.

Famous American writer Jessica Bennet in her article "Does the Media Hate Women?"opines that we are teaching young women that their worth lies in their youth, their beauty and in their sexuality but not in the capacity to lead, she says that the gap between women in media and women in real life is huge and growing. She expresses her grief over the "toxic, hyper sexualised images" young girls are being identified with. She also expresses that "even in the movies only 16%of the protagonists are women, or where in the Grated cartoon films they may be-were wearing clothes just revealing as those worn by women in films rated "R". Though this is the case in the U.S, things are nothing less even in India.

Certain ads like Santoor, Ole Total Effects, Ponds White Beauty, Vaseline or Rexona to name some, present women with curvaceous bodies and soft skins and say that their product does nt allow any woman to grow old. One way, these ads are making women believe that to grow old is a sin and on the other way they are pressurizing women to look younger than their age otherwise they will be branded as 'fashion less'. Women, mothers in the ads are no more seen in Indian traditional outfit but always in jeans and Ts, with a very modern look. Even in the movies today, we see very young mothers, who look ultra modern, at times younger to the heroes, too. These kinds of portrayals sending signs that mother who looks traditional and homely are illiterates and unsocial, which is eventually making children developing a hostile feeling towards their 'not so social and modern mothers'

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[3] Courtesy: Colors channel.

It is researched surveyed upon and found out that not even 10% issues about empowerment of women are being telecasted in the media but sensational stories about female actors, the secret behind their beautiful, toned bodies, their Botox surgeries, their pre, post marital affairs, lip locks, ill fitting dresses are the regular shows that channels to concentrate on. A vernacular channel in the south Zee Telugu went on telecasting shows based on 'what men like in a woman's body' in the beginning days of its inception, purely to increase its viewership. By assigning women again to present these shows, they took care as when a woman herself presents the show, it appeals as if it is not offending. They went on showing pictures of actresses with beautiful waists and lower backs and butts and finalized that men like women with curvaceous waists and broad butts. Finally, every where the whole essence of advertisements or serials or reality shows is that women are here to attract or seduce men and they do not have any other meaning for their lives.

Radical feminist Simonie Beauvior identifies house wives as "representative of all that is wrong with women's lives"and criticizes that housewives engaging in repetitive family chores" prevent their pursuit of self actualization or self realization"

Once there were days when issues about pregnancy labor, puberty, menstruation etc. were taboos. Even now 90% of women in India suffer silently over many gynic problems thinking that they should not be discussed openly. Over the years, it has been taught and circulated that women should bear with everything and should not make a hue and cry. Nothing worthwhile has been about how a woman should be taken care of when she conceives, what food and medication should be given, why a young girl attains puberty and what education, care she should be given were never discussed outside as if it is a sin. Women in scores used to die due to this kind of ignorance. Women were happy when in the 90's ads about 'mother and child care', 'sanitary napkins, 'diapers' 'hospital facilities' found place in the television. But now, it is the other way round, ads show that by using a certain brand sanitary pad, you can jump all around, wear skimpy clothes and carelessly go around the world forgetting that you have periods. Now...it has become a nuisance, young girls and women might need to rest when they go through their monthly cycle, these sanitary pads will not lessen the pain or tenderness they feel those days, this way ads are over acting now a days, simply highlighting useless issues to market their brands and giving wrong information where information is needed.

Do these channels ever think of presenting the wretched lives scores of women of this country who does not possess a pair of proper dressing and a meal and are oppressed, harassed everywhere on the roads, at work places, at home and in the schools which need to be brought out and protested upon? Is not it the responsibility of media to strive its best to bring out the social evils of the society and bring awareness to abolish them? Is not the increasing number of rapes, sexual assaults or sexist remarks on women a result of the porn sites does not have any control by the government? Are not all of us creating future generations of perverts who view every woman as a commodity? Is not Indian media behaving as if people of this country do not have any problems other than focusing their cameras on beauty contests or telecasting paid news forgetting their actual duties as a third eye in a country which has 21.92% of people still live below poverty line?

If this is not the case, women are presented as victims of obsessive compulsive disorders who repeatedly do the cleaning of the house or washing clothes or gossips. A detergent powder ad shows stereotypes of women who worry about their not so white clothes and show that are extremely happy as if they are complemented upon washing the clothes to the whitest of white. Either in the print media or electronic media, either in the magazines or in the text books of children, women are always shown in the kitchens and men in the drawing room watching T.V. This is how, stereotypes of women are written and circuited through the social media, which influences the women to imbibe them and imitate them. Advertisements and serials present modern and bold women as flirts and characterless but those with fully covered bodies who silently bear all the insults and still crave for the families as good and virtuous. No way have they tried to create strong women characters which inspire others to achieve something even in this era where we see number of women as CEO s, chancellors, writers, IPSs, entrepreneurs or inspiring leaders.

Daily Serials

Let me take the example of some very popular mega serials of a Hindi channel Balika Vadhu, *Madhubala and Utaran.* [4]*Balika Vadhu,* in the beginning, went on very well by taking the theme of child marriages which played havoc in the lives of young girls of India, in the past and which are still prevalent in certain remote areas of our country. The makers of the serial tried to depict the oppression the societal norms imposed on tiny girls was presented in the leadcharacter Anandi who played the victimized child bride.

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[4] Courtesy: Colors channel.

In the beginning episodes of the serial, we see Anandi, married to a boy, grows up to be a strong woman who gets educated later and fights for the rights of child brides of the Rajasthan area. In the process we see her as a super woman who bears all the insults by her in laws family with a smile and perseverance without giving up.

The other two female leads of the other two mentioned serials Madhubala and Iccha, too, continuously go on forgiving the villains or the ones who try to kill them, by presenting and circulating wrong, utopian ideology that tells a woman should be patient in bearing the insults and forgiving all the time to be identified as an ideal woman. Thus, everywhere in the media, movies or in the internet we see women over presented or under presented but never rightly presented are not Mother Teresa who could leave her own country to serve the poorest of the poor a great inspiration? Indira Gandhi, Medha Patkar, our first woman IPS officer Kiran Bedi, Infosys Sudha Murthy, Shabana Azmi, Angsan Sukyi, Williams sisters, (International Tennis) Sojourner truth (African American Abolitionist and women's rights activist)Margaret Thather, our own Satyabhama (Mahabharath), what great power and self confidence all these women showed? Are not these enough stories to inspire the present day women to think big beyond beauty and complements? And how many of the daily serial producers are making serial with inspiring themes?

India has more than hundred T.V channels other than the Prasara Bharathiowned Doordarshan that provide news, music, films, serials, sports, religious preaching, education but every channel has something to surely telecast about only movies and the celebrities and the things to do to stay fit. Even while giving news like wife killing her husband, without due to the affects globalization and Western culture which is circulating ideology that says 'human life is to enjoy and there is nothing wrong if one wants to marry again if unhappy with the existing relationships'(there is a rise in the divorce cases and extra marital affairs, according to a recent study) orientation and awareness should be given to the individuals who seek separation or divorce but how far it is fair to project only woman as the culprit and being references from Manu Dharmasashtra which says that '[5]women are infidel and love to flirt with many men?' According to a university researcher's survey (UoH) it is in fact sex and sensation are reasons behind repeated telecasting of issues of love affairs and extra marital affairs.

Obscenity and vulgarity are the important issues that are being projected about women at present in Indian media. Commoditization of women as a sex object,a body, is continuously projected in both print and electronic media. Women's thought process should also be changed without getting carried away by the popular opinions. In the intellectual gatherings and political meetings or discussions women are hardy seen as part of the discussions, it is always men who dominate in the intellectual, political issues and women simply invited to adorn the show. Women, too have made significant advancement in many areas but the media has been slow to recognize these gains and has not sufficiently brought out the actual potential in women.

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[5] Manu in one of his doctrines of Manu Dharmasashtra says that all women are flirts and can never be trusted.

The electronic media almost made it very compulsory for women to look good always when you seek a job. (Faireverfairness cream ad) Along with many good things, globalization also brought the 'issue of acceptability' to India. With the kind of advertisements that project women's beauty as only being fair skinned with an hour glass figure with figure hugging, scanty clothes, women are slowly falling victims for the socially acceptable behavior and following the trend crazily and spoiling their health and time. Even the middle class young girls, too, naively trying to imitate the trend ending up victims of disorders namely Anorexia nervosa or Bulimia.

For instance an ad by Chandana Brothers, a leading textile company, shows a complete backless, low hipped woman clad in their sere. Some decades ago, the same ad showed a model in their sari who looked like a goddess, in a fully covered apparel. Is the growing business mindedness the reason behind this change? Ads of fairness creams show all the dusky skinned girls become fair skinned which make them successful in their careers. Ads of Fair and lovely, Fairever, Ole Total Effects, Vaseline body care, Santoor soap and many more indirectly degrade dusky women and make them victims of inferiority complex by showing fairness as acceptable. In fact, Indians are on the duskier and not so thin people unlike the Western, now these ads are influencing people to pine for what they actually are not. Young girls are ending up with anemia and underweight by going for crash diets in the hurry to become slim.

An aerial view of the depiction of women in the social media today clearly states that "women's abilities as equal partners in development are lost between cooking oils and fairness creams. Even the portrayal of serials too, women are being burdened by being portrayed as centers of peace and harmony or disturbance in the family. Age old laws of Manu still seems to continuously influence the present century, too by calling women as centre for everything completely excluding men as innocent, passive beings who toil for the family by being out always.

Woman in the News Papers

Newspapers too are nothing less, they love to present the news of molestations, rape, crime, politics, scandals, sports and economics sincerely at some corner or the other (here, too, hegemony can be witnessed, poor, low class, caste women's issues find place only in the last pages or corners of inner pages) but debates involving the younger generation and local political representatives goes completely missing. In the vernacular press too, portrayal of women gets a share only in colored pages where there is a lot of gossip about the celebrity women or film stars along with hot picture in a corner. The English news papers, too, contribute their best by providing snaps of hot babes with erotic photo gallery of party mania of the rich families of the city in the pubs or night parties as if nothing important is there to report.

Media made it a social need for women to look beautiful. The present day news channels have plenty of young, good looking, smart teenagers, either as anchors, news readers or reporters. Even they are constantly changed in pursuit of fresh faces, so we don't even see a 28 or 30 year old woman as a news presenter now a days like in the Doordarshan days. It is not very difficult, too, to understand that these girls are appointed majorly not because of their proficiency, fluency or pronunciation or awareness in the given area but only because of their good looks and young age. Some channels act more smart by making women only present these gossip or skin show episodes so that to avoid any controversy regarding the content as they were presented by the same gender and they could escape by saying that those anchors dint have any problem in presenting those explicit, cheap issues.

In this chapter, I tried to look at the demeaning, degrading, demoralizing manner women are portrayed, presented in the media, in a country like India which had been called as [6]Karma bhoomi. India is a land of versatility, rich culture and boasts about a land that gives immense respect to its women. Such a country is caught in the web of globalization which is making woman as a commodity, a saleable body. The consequences of allowing globalization to continue uncontrolled are hard to understand or predict but would certainly include massive and irreversible damage to the cultural ethos of developing countries by circulating uncontrolled Westernization.

I would like to look at what the press council, censor board and the Supreme Court says about this: The press council of India has very clear cut guidelines and rules on how women should be portrayed and there is a lot of controversy regarding this. Also, many news papers are not clear in their own guidelines while tackling such sensitive issues. There are in reality, stringent laws in punishing the perpetrators of this crime, too: The indecent Representation of Women Act-1986. It should work to check the indecent representation of women, section-4 prohibits the production, sale, hire, distribution, circulation, sending by post, pamphlets, film, writing, drawing, painting, anything which contain indecent representation of women, thus shall we think that the press council is sleeping when only indecency about women, happening around?

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[6] land of deeds

Adding to these, The National Commission of Women has suggested modifications in the Act and elaborated upon ways to strengthen it and make it workable so that the objectives are achieved. The NCW recommended that section 2(b) of the Act be modified to read as derogatory representation of women means the depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman, her form of body or any part thereof in such a way as to have the effect of being derogatory or denigrate women and is also likely to deprive, corrupt or endanger public morality or morals. In spite of the law, gender concerns in the media is a serious concern today as the problems of women's portrayal in the media have been agitating the civil society and an attempt is being made to curb this growing problem continued.

Movies

As an answer to the cheap, vulgar portrayals of women in movies like *Dabband-2, Race-2*,recent Hindi movies, the Delhi high courts slammed the censor board for not doing the job properly and asked it and the centre to two separate PILs alleging vulgar contents in a provocating item number in Dabbing which compared a woman to 'be a grilled chicken to be eaten up with alcohol'.

A look at the recent movies like *Jism-2, Ragini MMS, Hate story-2* for instance tell us volumes about what the projected image of 'woman' today in Indian society. There is no count for the 'almost porn movies' that are released in the vernacular media, silently, for which young boys get access very easily, though they bear a 'A'certificate. Are not these movies which inject the sexist thoughts in the tender minds are reasons for the perverted and inhuman ways girls are being raped and physically assaulted during the time of rape? Even a three year old girl is raped almost every day and many times minor boys are found to be the perpetrators. Are not the movies that depict physical pleasures as greatest pleasures on earth, are undoubtedly the reasons behind this?

Pressure on the courts by the citizens to probe in to censor board's malfunctioning is mounting day by day. Recently on the 19th of August CEO of

Censor Board Rakesh Kumar was arrested on bribery scandal. Approving this, Hansal Mehta, director of the Board says:[7] "There was never any uniformity with the certification process. The censorship code is redundant. The system is corrupt."

Gandhi Perisamy, a senior official at Censor board, agreed that"film producers and directors need to be responsible and realize that they have moral obligations too, towards the society. He also opines that govt. should wake up to the fact that majority censor members are not carrying their jobs and are corrupt, they are making money by passing the movies that lust in tender minds.

"There are considerable punishments, too for the perpetrators of the crime by the courts but as the officials are not sincere and responsible, the present vulgarity is finding place in the movies. The cinematograph act, 1952 provides that if there is violation of certification provisions or if there are tampering of certified or non certifies are exhibited, penalties specified there in can be imposed."

I would like to refer to the words of [8]Prashant Pawar, the member of advisory panel, CBFC which might clarify on the powers of Censor Board in film certification, "the display of nudity, dialogues with double meaning or vulgar sentences, extreme violence of law, blatant breaking of the law by the actors and getting away with it etc. are what is permitted by some panel members of the censor board. They push the youth towards violence, attempts sexual escapades at a young age. Such films should be banned. If this persists, the crime rate would explode; I was the one who banned Honey Singh from his live show in Nagpur."

Conclusion

The question now is how to change the media into an effective tool for promoting constructive change and faithfully representing the multiple roles of the women today-as achievers in both private and public spheres. This scenario may lead any one to comprehend a totally un friendly attitude towards India, but a relent less, sincere struggle will do the rest, keeping in mind the needs of the present day modernization as well as the needs of strengthening of Indian cultural ethos. Even the press council of India has very clear-cut guidelines and rules on how women should be portrayed. But who cares? People should respond, too, by questioning the degrading ways women are presented and circulated through social media. With all these efforts from all the corners, it not an impossible issue to solve.

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[7] Hindustan Times, Aug 21st 2014.

[8] Nagpur Today, an on line news paper of Nagpur (sep 17th 2013)

Also, everything should work together. Government, courts, movie and serial makers, NGOs, students, feminists, actors, celebrities, everyone should think about the future generations, how callously they are being brought up, being lost in the chaos of sexist ideologies which does not approve of any other bond except the male and female species. Is not it dangerous in a country which revere every woman as 'mother?'Let's take everything other goodness from the world outside but about family, relations, mother hood, we have our own country, let us not look anywhere else, let's come back to our roots, imbibe them, and respect women.

CBFC is the authority which also certifies the television shows, television ads, publication for exhibition sale or hire in India, other than movies, then, the present manner of mushrooming of commodification of women in movies and ads can be restricted if the CBFC rededicates itself to work for the promotion of sensible movies and shows. India, too, follow the example of China once again, where their govt. made it a policy to ban obscenity, vulgarity from their movies, even on internet, all porn sites are banned, even if it means that their movies do not make a profit. That is the reason behind their incomparable victory in Olympics and other sports.

Television shows or movies may be even more powerful than new programs in terms of ts impact on viewers. The characters should be consistent with the women image in real life in order to accommodate their changing role in society.

I would like to conclude by referring to a real life incident that took place in Southern Karnataka, just two weeks ago. [9]Yellamma, a 22 year old pregnant woman who lives at Neelakantaraayanigadda, an island village on Krishna River, dared to swim across the river to a village which was 9 kilometers away. She had no other go as their village was surrounded by flood water and she was almost full term pregnant who needed medical attention. She was healthy and ready for delivery, after swimming 9 solid kilometers, too. This is the news women want; need these kinds of presentations and portrayals, about real women and their struggle, presence on mind, their perseverance. Woman is the mother of whole mankind, she suffers but never cares, rears her children till her last breath, she has been underestimated, tormented, insulted, ignored for ages, for her forbearing nature. In India, unlike in other Western countries, women are the worst sufferers who have been victimized till date, let's not do that anymore, let's give her the respect she deserves for the multiple tasks she carries without any complaint. They are not mere bodies, bodies with caring hearts.

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[9] Imran Qureshi, reporter BBC News

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Chapter 15

Saga of Outsider Amongst Outsiders: A Study of the Representation of Transgender in Bollywood Director Mahesh Bhatt's Films- Sadak and Tamanna

Ms. Daivata Patil & Ms. Sandhya Dangwal

Abstract

The study focuses on how the media portray the 'Hijra' community in bollywood films, how this portrayal makes people develop an image of the community and what the hiras feel about their projection in films. It tries to find out the media role in community behaviourin a particular fashion and whetherbehave the way they are seen in films just because of media pressure. It showcases how human tragedies become goldmines for artists and they themselves come into prominence and the sad, tragic life of hijra won the artistsa national award for the films but the lives they write about remain silent. The portrayal of life stories and issues faced by hijras are identified by directors like Mahesh Bhatt and the director therefore brings people closer to this community which otherwise wouldn't have been possible.

Key words: Transgender, Hijra, bollywood films, Sadak, Thamanna

Introduction

Film being an audio-visual medium is one of the best and effective means of communication. To some extent they have also become guidelines and inspirations for behavioral patterns for individuals and society. Cinema is a reflection of the society and vice-versa. Although, it is a clichéd sentence but one has to take support of it specifically if you are talking about social structures. Our social structure comprises of different gender groups namely males, females and transgender. This chapter discusses the plight of transgender in Bollywood film contents.

'Hijra' as they are commonly addressed are different not only in terms of anatomy but also in terms of language and culture. It is a community with a strong sense of social solidarity. They are poor, illiterate and look upon themselves as cursed for the sins of their past life. They are rarely employed in regular jobs and hence often resort to prostitution and begging for economic survival, though many would like to lead normal lives. They are often faced with lives of isolation, poverty, public ridicule and are treated worse than untouchables. The discrimination based on their class and gender makes the community one of the most disempowered groups of Indian society.

The hijra community is divided into seven houses, each headed by a 'nayak' who appoints gurus or spiritual leaders to train their wards or `chelas' in badhai and protect them. Transgender in South India do not have the same cultural role as in North India and most of them take up sex work and asking for alms as a means of earning a living. Depending on the regions, the transgender are named differently (Narrain, 2003).

One can also find references of transgender in Indian mythology. In Ramayana, when Lord Rama was banished from the kingdom of Ayodhya by his father King Dasharath, upon the insistence of Queen Kaikeyi, all the residents of Ayodhya accompanied him to the border of the kingdom to see him off. Lord Rama then asked all men and women of Ayodhyato return to their home. Everyone left but transgender stayed there for a period of fourteen years, homeless, bearing heat, cold, rain, thunder and lightning, waiting for Lord Rama's return from exile. Impressed by their devotion, Rama sanctions them the power to confer blessings on people on auspicious occasions like childbirth and marriage, and also at inaugural functions, (mythology and History, 2010).

In Mahabharata too when Aravan, son of Arjuna and Nagakanya, was offered to be sacrificed to Goddess Kali to ensure the victory of the Pandavas in the Kurukshetra war, he has put a condition that he wants to spend his last night in matrimony. Since no woman was willing to marry one who was doomed to be killed, Krishna took form of a beautiful woman Mohini and marries him. The hijras of Tamil Nadu consider Aravan their progenitor and call themselves aravanis. This is one such story that comes from the south, depicting the origin of Hijras, Narrain, 2003).

Transgender were always neglected in the society. Being in minority, they do not have a say amongst those in majorities. The mainstream cinema pays no heed to their conditions of living. When we are talking about transgender, the immediate picture that comes to our minds is clapping of hands in a peculiar manner. India is one of the largest film producing country and huge numbers of cinema goers. Cinema is a symbolic form which influences and persuades its audiences. Therefore, it becomes all the more important to check the representation of its people in films as this representation is creating an image in the minds of its audiences.

The streaming away of the Hijra community and not treating them like other normal beings, not considering them as a part of the society, is in itself a societal disdain. We tend to rely on media so much, that whatever we see, we tend to believe without even a deep understanding of the context it is framed in. The mainstream Hindi cinema which is the most widely distributed cinema in India and abroad has traditionally adopted an attitude of denial or mockery towards LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-Gender or Questioning) community.

In Indian cinema, transgender are generally stereotyped and have so far been the figures of rejection. Many of them have been the brunt of crude jokes especially in the song sequences. Many actors cross-dressed with deliberate crudity so that they are not mistaken for a woman but a eunuch in an attempt to evoke laughter Queering Bollywood-Eunuchs in Indian Cinema).

Objectives

The objective of the current paper is to:

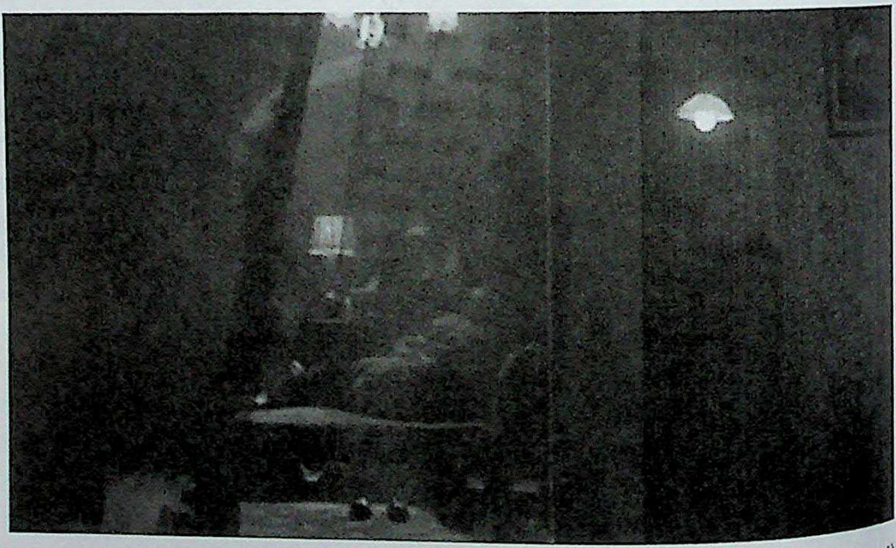
1. Examine the representation of transgender in Sadak (1991) and Tamanna (1997)
2. Understand transgender (hijra's) perspective of both the characters. (Maharani and Tiku)
3. Understand the director's perspective of both the films- Sadak and Tamanna

Content of the both the films was first analysed. The categories for the same were lighting, costume (make-up, jewelry, clothes), camera angles, language and the characters' behavior in accordance to others. A screenshot of each of such narrative was taken. The film was screened to 16 hijras. An administered survey by semi-structured questionnaire method was conducted after each screening. The questions were related to how the media portray the 'Hijra' community in bollywood films, how this portrayal makes people develop an image of the community and what the hijras feel about their projection in films? Is it because of the media that the community behaves in a particular fashion? Or are they originally the way they are? Or is it that, they behave the way they are seen in films just because of media pressure?

After the content and survey analysis, in- depth interview of the director (Mahesh Bhatt) was taken to understand his perspective.

Analysis

First appearance of Maharani in the film Sadak:



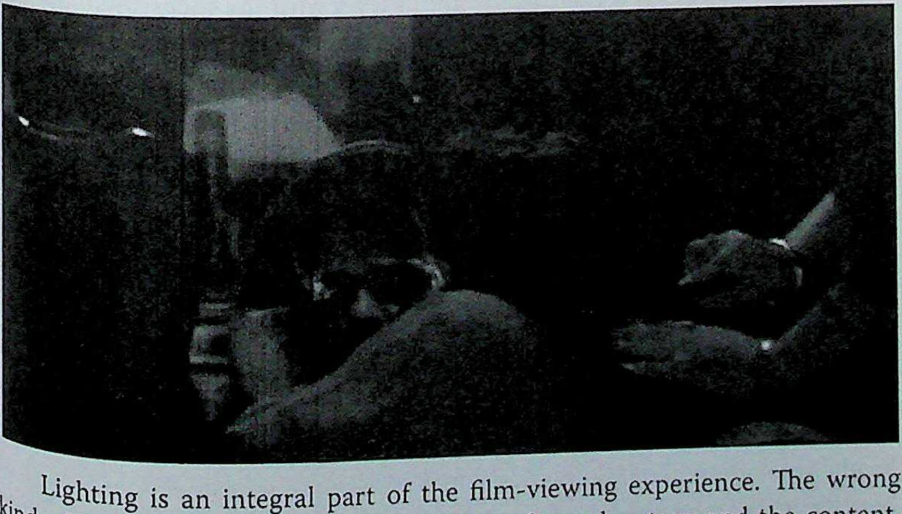
This is the establishing shot where Sadashiv Amprapurkar (Maharani) appears first, in the film. It is a wide-angle shot. Establishing shot enables the audience to understand where the scene is being set so that the plot is not disjointed. The shot establishes the character in a very subtle way. Maharani appears to be lying down on a sofa where a girl follows her instruction. The girl is seen applying nail-paint on Maharani's feet. This is a brothel, which Maharani owns and runs and is therefore called as Maharani (A lady who rules). It has red lighting all over, the camera and lighting predominantly establishes the arrogance of the character as well as that it is a red light area.

Tamanna:

(2) In Tamanna, this is the first shot in which Tiku appears grieving beside his mother, Naazneen Begum.

In Tamanna, this is the first appearance of Tiku on screen. Tiku is found crying beside his mother's coffin and complaining to Allah, that Allah has taken away everything from him. His mother seems to be very close to him and his reason of living. The softness of the character is established in the opening scene itself. The makeup is not very loud,Tiku is soft spoken unlike Maharani.

Sadak:



Lighting is an integral part of the film-viewing experience. The wrong kind of lighting can take the audience away from the story and the content.

No art form can be well established without proper lighting. To an untrained eye, mainstream film sets look drastically over-lit. However, no scene can be shot without artificial lights. The reason being, either the shadows will go completely black or the highlights will go completely white. If the demand of the scene is to look natural, ironically the only way to do that is to have enough light to make film see the scene the way we want it to be seen.

The lightings are used in an unrealistic manner. Most of the shots of the film were shot on set, thus using artificial lights and were set up in order to give the shot a proper finishing. The above shot is a close-up shot, defining the character of Maharani. Low lightings are used. Red is a color that appears to be prominent in the shot, making the character stand larger than life. Red color is being used in almost all the shots where Maharani appears, probably because red excites our emotions and inspires us to take action. Also, it demands you to take notice, alerting you to danger.

The costume that is Maharani is seen wearing in the above shot is called as 'Kada' (pant and shirt/kurti). The costume and make up here go hand in hand. In the shot, we can see a female combing Maharani's hair. The 'Tikka' on Maharani's forehead probably signifies the quality of being a villain in the film and that Maharani is independent and self-satisfied in the way she is and the way she earns money.

The angle used in the above shot is eye-level. Eye level is a common camera angle used in films. Eye- level is the most common view, being the real-world angle that we are all used to. The camera is positioned at the eye-level of the subjects and their heads are in level with the focus. Also, here in the above shot, over the shoulder shot is used to make the character look more prominent. Maharani is always surrounded by people like a queen which is appears to be- the queen of her brothel.

The set lights are used very effectively here, maintaining the need of the situation. Proper use of backlight is done. The background light too makes the brothel look dim, maintaining the actual scenario of a brothel. Lights such as household lamps with shades are practical which fit in with the natural look of a location, and don't break the illusion of reality for the audience of a film.

Maharani is seen combing her hair in a very feminine manner. The way she talks, her gestures and the tone, is a proper way of understanding how a villain appears larger than life. In various other films, costumes may be quite stylized, calling attention to their purely graphic qualities but in Sadak, costumes are carefully orchestrated with one another in their colors, their textures, and even their movements, keeping in mind the place and the importance of the character.

Darr mat merijaan, darr mat. Mai kuch nahi karungi. Mai kuch kar hi nahi sakti. Janti ho kyu? Kyu ki mai aadha mard huaur aadhi aurat. Dekhna, naroopna rang, yeh kismat ka khel toh dekh. Agar kuchhaina mere pass, toh who sirf dimaag hai, kamaal ka dimaag hai mere pass is liye mai mard ki seva karti hu aur auraton ka dhanda. Yahan ka raja, is jism ke bazzar ka maharaja, aur naam hai Maharani.

Mai batati huyeh sab kismat ka khel hai. Kismat jisse kehna hai na hum? Wo hai yeh sab. Tere baap ne aur tere chacha ne mere se kuch karz liya tha. Tere dada ke bimaari ke liye girwi rakha tha. Girwi jaanti hai na tu? Girwi?

(Don't get scared my girl, don't be scared. I won't harm you. I just cannot harm you. Do you know why? That is because I am a eunuch. I am half man and half woman. Look at me; I don't have the looks of a beautiful woman. This is my fate and plight of my life. The only thing that I have is a sharp mind. I serve the men by selling women. I am the king of this place but my name is Maharani. What a fate? Do you know what destiny is? This is what it is. Your father and uncle had borrowed some money from me, which they were unable to return. Do you understand the meaning of mortgage?)

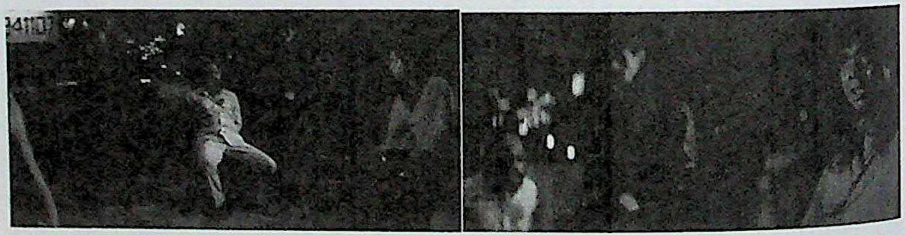
The language used is very blunt and harsh. Maharani is very clear that she has plans to sell Pooja to men in the brothel because her father and

CC- oundation,Ch Grant

uncle did not pay her debts and that she would take the revenge by keeping Pooja in the brothel and making money by forcefully selling her. The aggression of Maharani is very revengeful here.

Audiences very well associate light and shadow to good and evil respectively. Shadows can have horrific or comic effect on audiences depending on how they are depicted. The more contrast, the more dramatic impact it creates. However, the quality and placement of lights contribute to the narrative, character development and audience engagement. The above shot evokes curiosity amongst the viewers, thus calling for attention. The shadow has a very haunting effect in this shot.

Though the character is shown getting dressed up and applying makeup. Applying makeup is a very soft act and is perceived as attracting point but here the way it was shown did not create that impact at all. The image in the form of shadow appeared disgusting. Instead of evoking shringara rasa it evoked bhibhatsam.



--When Maharani catches hold of Sharif Bhai, Ravi's (Sanjay Dutt) friend

Paani..paani..paani... arrey paani kya.. arrey Sharif bhai, hum tumko daaru pilayenge.. Daaru, who b English Daru..kyu, sirf apna dost ka pata bata de! Bata de na.... Saale, do ghante se yahan baithe hain..dekha bhi agar tune pata nahi batayana, toh yeh chikna hai na chikna, pet faadega haan! Usme se pata nikalega, joh tune khaya hai saale!

Arreybaapre! Saalathuktahai! Thukkardaraatahaimujhe! Aye chikne, maar na! jaldi maar! Saalathuktahai mere upar!

(Water? You want water? Today we will make you drink liquor... and that to a branded one. Tell us where your friend is else my man will tear you apart. Look he is spitting at me..aye just look at him, he dared to do that..just kill him)

Light is not only important to be able to film the subject, but the direction and type of light can play a huge role in setting the mood. A specific type of light conveys or brings out details in the subject that other types of light may not be able to show. In the above shot, artificial lightings are used. Maharani appears on the darker side adding a tinge to her dark personality.

A wide-angle lens has more peripheral vision and can 'see' more of what is to their side. In the above shot, wide-angle shot is used to establish a relation between the subject and the characters in the frame. The motive of using a wide-angle shot would probably be, to show all in the picture and things in just one shot. Here in the above shot, there are two important characters. A wide angle shot leads to the exaggeration of relative size can be used to add emphasis and detail to foreground objects, while still capturing expansive backgrounds.

The language in the above shot is very crude and depicts the iniquitous behavior of Maharani.

In Tamanna:

--After Tiku's mother passes away. He is crying aloud.

The movie begins with Paresh Rawal (Tiku), sitting in an open location, grieving beside his mother's coffin. The lighting is natural. Depending on the situation, the filmmaker has to take into account the amount of natural light available and the amount of natural light needed which is perfectly shown in the above mentioned scene. Direct sunlight may overkill and was inappropriate for the mood of the scene. The simplest way to diffuse light is by positioning your subjects in relation to the sun and that is what is done in the shot above. Light can represent a feeling or a presence. Colored lights can hold meaning or highlight the tone of a scene.

"Tiku was a hijra, but he did not feel a part of the community", Mahesh Bhatt said in an interview. When we see Tiku in the above shot, we see that Tiku hasn't applied any make-up like Maharani, not even minimum. Also, Tiku's hair is above the shoulder which is not acceptable in the hijra community. Also, Tiku appears like a man in the entire movie other than in shots where he dances in a wedding.

A mid-shot is used in the above picture. The mid shot shows some part of the subject in more detail, whilst still showing enough for the audience. Here, Tiku being an important character in the film, along with Manoj Bajpai (Salimbhai in the film) appears on screen and have people in the background who are out focused. The motive of the mid-shot is to include all the on-screen things.

The tone in the above scene is very abhorring. He complains to Allah that he has done wrong to him by taking his mother away from him. When compared to Sadashiv as Maharani in Sadak, Tiku's language is decent and normal. The dialogue in the above seen goes like this:

"Nahi... nahi... nahi... nahi... nahi... bohot bura kiya hai tune mere sath. Allah ne bohot bura kiya hai mere sath. Bohot bura! Mujhe bhi iske sath jana hai! Mujhe bhi iske saath hi jana hai..

(No no...no no... Allah you have done wrong to me. Very wrong. Even I want to go with her. Even I want to go with her.)

The simplicity and the innocence in Tiku's voice shows how emotional a hijra can get after a sad incident. The pain in his voice calls off attention and evokes an emotional feeling in the hearts of the viewers too. The sadness in his tone depicts how important his mother was in his life.

Paresh Rawal (Tiku) portrays an emotional and very kind-hearted character, typically how hijras normally are (inputs given by hijra communtiy in the survey). Hijras related themselves more to Tiku and not Sadashiv because they don't cause harm to anyone. They are kind and humble at heart. They won't sell a woman in a market just to earn money just like Sadashiv does in the movie Sadak. They respect every individual and find happiness in the happiness of others and also share grief if any. The character Tiku in the film is shown to be very diplomatic, talking with the proper grace of a female and power as that of a man, preferably like a female, in the body of a male.

--When Tiku saw the small baby lying in open. He holds her and is asking people about her whereabouts.

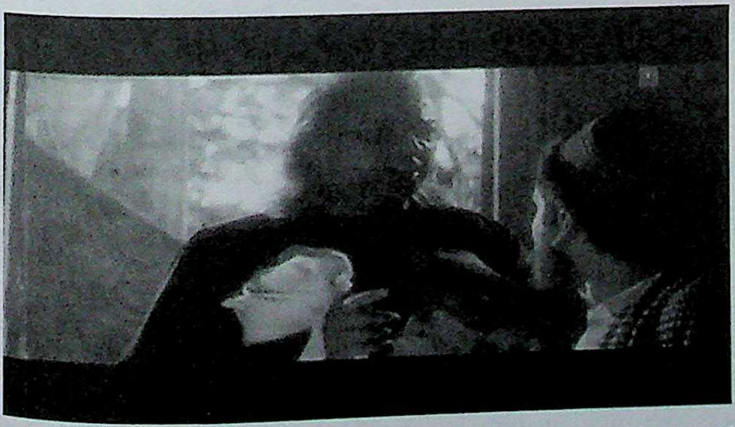
Light and shadows are never accidental but are used by the director as conscious decisions to control what the audience sees. Blue light represents calmness and it sets the mood of the audience. Also, the blue light shows the sadness through which the character goes through. Here in the above shot, Tiku is sad about the fact that somebody left the child in a bin. He goes and picks up the child from the bin. The shot is taken in the night probably because the director wanted to evoke a feeling of sympathy when everything around you has become quite. Blue lighting is also used to depict night time. Tiku had been crying all throughout the day and after all that when he washes his face, he finds a baby there near the dustbin.

The costume of Tiku is kept to the minimum. Only few dress changes. No loudness in clothing was observed except for the dancing sequence. The costume marks the identity of the character. Here in this film the director wanted audience's attention throughout on Tiku and not on his costumes (as mentioned by Mahesh Bhatt in his interview).

"Arrey yeh baccha kiska hai? Arrey koi sun raha hai? Aye baba, yeh baccha mar jayega..arrey koi sun raha hai yeh baccha mar jayega."

(Whose baby is this? Is anyone here? This baby will die. Is anyone listening? This baby will die)

This shot shows the caring nature of the character. The hijra picks the baby up and is quite panicked about the fact that the baby is abandoned. When this movie was shown to the transgender while taking a survey, they got emotional by the scene because this is how they originally are (as claimed by them) and the world takes them to be completely different in terms of behavior and nature.



In this shot, natural day light is used. Over the shoulder and Mid-shot is being used for this scene.

Salim bhai, aap ke aankhon me aansu dekh ke mujhe bohot sukun mil raha hai. Aaj koi mere liye ro raha hai, yeh rakh lijiye, yeh tamanna ki shaadi k liye! Ab aap dekhiye, sirf dekhiye is hijde me kitna dum hai.

(Salim Bhai, I feel content today knowing that somebody is there who is crying for me. Please keep this money with you for Tamanna's wedding. Now, you just watch the strength of a hijra)

A new hope in the form of the baby has come in Tiku's life. He gathered all his lost strength with a new zeal that has given purpose to his life. That can be sensed in his voice and expressions. And then later in the film Tiku goes and earns money by dancing at weddings to overcome expenses and finds Tamanna's real family.

(A series of shots when Pooja, (Pooja Bhatt) comes to know that Tiku, her abbu is a hijra)

The director has used natural lighting in the scene. The scene is shot in day as per the previous continuation of the sequence. Tiku is wearing jewelry and is dressed up like a female. He wears 'Saatla' (A male who dresses like a female). The first is two are long shots and the third one is a close up shot. Long shots are used to show the places and various activities of Tiku. The close up shot is taken in order to establish the scenes gravity and to notify the audiences the expression on Tiku's face. Here Pooja figures out that Tiku is a hijra.

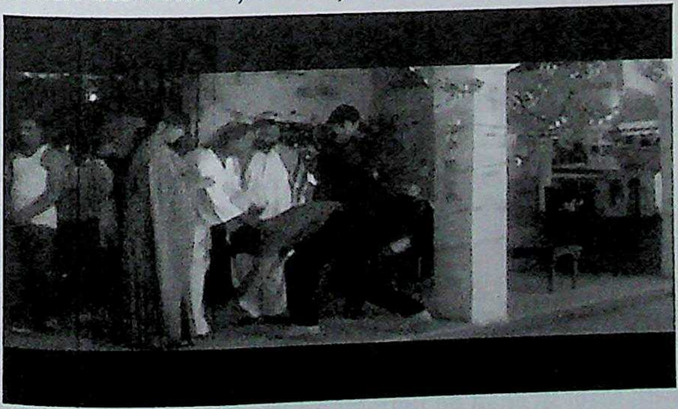
Tiku was hiding his identity from Tamanna and thought that he would not reveal it to her, but unfortunately Tamanna comes to meet Tiku without prior notice from the hostel and gets a shock to see Tiku, dressed like a female.

This is a night sequence shot in the indoor of a studio. The lights are artificial. Tiku hides behind a strong focus light. This portrays that Tiku runs away from the situation and hides in dark. Mid-long shot is used in the above scene.

Manoj Bajpai, (Salim Bhai), says,

Isne tere liye itna kuch kiya hai, tere muh pee chhale nahi pade? Agar yeh hijra hai, toh lanat hai hum sab mardon par

(He has done so much for you. Have taken care of you. Didn't you get hesitated to utter the world hijra? Okay, if he is a hijra, shame on us, men)



-- When Tamanna decides to stay back with Tiku and not with her original parents

The lighting is natural day lighting. It is a long shot, describing all the characters in a single frame. This shot has a particular place as it helps to create a scene with a happy ending. Tiku is wearing white color to give a fresh and happy feel. White is also symbolic of peace and tranquility. A feeling director wanted at the climax.

Arre baaba.... nahi beta..Humne... humne kuch nahi kiya re baaba. Humne kahan kuch kiya hai, hai na Saim bhai? Humne kuch nahi kiya. Yeh toh upar wale ka pyaar mujh par baras pada aur yeh bacchi mujhe mil gayi..aur mujhe bhi toh koi chahiye na, jab mai maru toh chaddar udane ke liye.. hai na Salim bhai?

(We haven't done anything great. It is by the grace of God that I found this girl. I have got somebody to perform last rituals after my death. Right, Salim Bhai?)

Perspective of Transgender on the Portrayal of Both the Characters

(Prominent views from survey)

Shayna, one of the transgender said, "Sadashiv is shown to be wicked because that was a part of the narrative and was the need of the film. Hijras originally aren't so wicked. Like every coin has two sides, some are arrogant and rude but most of them like almost 99% of the Hijras are kind-hearted and generous".

Another one, Kaif Qureshi said, "Hijras are very kind and good at heart. They think other's probems as their problems. They will never hurt anyone. They find happiness in the happiness of others and share the grief in the same way. Like the way Tiku is shown, hijras are just the way it is portrayed in the film, very kind and caring for others".

Manjiriadded, "People are scared of hijras. They are afraid that we will harm them, but we are not like that, we do not cause harm. My family has accepted me as a hijra; I have been accepted in my native too. I am lucky in this sense and there are only few who are lucky like me to be accepted the way I am. Some are not accepted by their family and are outcasted from the society too. They have a difficult time.

Sneha, who works as a councilor said, "It is wonderful working here and being with people of my community. We are like others, even we work hard. I live with my mother and she is quite happy with the fact that I am a hijra."

Interview with Mahesh Bhatt on Both the Films

1. What made you design the two distinctive characters (Maharani and Tiku)?

I as an artist, steal from life and showcase it in my movies and writings.

I had the privilege to meet a fascinating character called Tiku, who was the son of a bygone days star called Naaznin Begam. He (Tiku) was a hijra and tall, tough and a very charismatic individual who had the grace of a woman in his body but an animal, brute power of a man. So I saw these two sides of him and I couldn't take my eyes off him. He was a part of my growing up days because he was a hairdresser of the movie world. I remember his voice, quirky voice; he used to talk in this way, 'kaisahai baba'. He was very gentle and wore a kurta and pyjama. So I made Sadak first. Sadak was sourced from my memory of Tiku because I had seen his fight and when I used to see him fight, men would run away. He was so brave that he would take a mob on and him fighting, with the femininity, grace and that body was a sight for gods to watch. Then the moment when I chronicled him, when I showcased him in Sadak, which was a work of fiction. One day when I came back home, after the success of Sadak, I saw him standing under my building. He had come back to connect with me after years, and he thought I didn't recognize him and I recognized him and got him home with great love and respect and then he told me a sad story of his life. Why had he come? He had come because he thought now I had money and he was looking after a girl called Tamanna, the girl whom he had picked from the streets of Mahim. One morning, during Ramzan, as he had finished Sehri, after that he was going to perform his Namaz, in the Mahim Dargah, he heard baby crying and he wondered where in the darkness is this sound coming and he found the baby near a dustbin and in the dustbin there was a girl child left, and rats were nibbling the girl child. He immediately was aghast and he picked up the child and took the child to an Iranian shop and then he soaked cotton wool in milk and fed the baby. As you know the Prophet of Islam had outlawed the massacre of the girl child because prior to that in those regions of the world, the girl child was also considered a burden and they were killed at birth and he had outlawed it, so I think what was operating with Tiku was the narrative of his Prophet that the girl child should be protected like anybody else. So, he, a hijra, protected the girl child, fathered it like one of his own which most of the majority community won't do, a majority community which is known to abort female fetuses and he raised this girl child up and he was having problems when she was growing up, because he used to sleep on the streets.

And he said, "*baba mai toh sadak pe sota hu, ab Tamanna 14- 15 saal ki ho gayi hai. ek jawaan bachhi kesath sadak pe sona, yeh joh mera jism hai na, budha ho gaya hai. mai ladd ke bhi isse bacha nahi paunga. To mujhe paise chahiye the, isse school me dalne ke liye*".

This idea struck me and I decided to make Tamanna. His sad, tragic life, his bravery, won me a national award for the film, to Paresh Rawal and also to

Poojabhatt. So, how human tragedies become goldmines for artists and they themselves come into prominence but the lives they write about remain silent.

2. What was your idea of Sadak?

Sadak was prior to Tamanna. Sadak was because I was fascinated by the male side of Tiku. Sadak was a work of fiction. It was more of imagination. Sadashiv did it well. I always find them very interesting. Especially, they shock the structures of your so-called respected perception of society. They are the ones who rock the boat.

3. What is your idea of hijras?

They are the third gender now. Even the Supreme Court has said that. I was completely fine and comfortable with them. I like them; I like them because all the respectable houses were scared of them.

4. In both the films, the transgender play a very important role. When you see the representation in both the films, they are polar opposites of each other, was it intentional on your part to do so?

The mass media doesn't have a kind of respect and reverence that they need to have but in Tamanna you have, through the eyes of the central character even the child whom he has brought up looks at him with guilt, which is a societal disdain and then discovers beauty in the hijra and comes back to him. The moment she comes to know about him, he gets shocked, he was hiding his identity, which was a part of the narrative. So through that narrative, the hope that the society will accept and look at these people, they pressurize and that happened much later. The movie was made in 1997 and today is 2014, and there you see the change. So an artist is, in a way a visionary. What we aspire for societies; law makers do it much later.

5. What made you show Sadashiv so evil in Sadak and why was the lighting different as compared to Tamanna?

Sadashiv was an evil man and the area was supposed to be a red-light area. That was supposed to be in a bat-man space of the joker; the larger than life portrayal. Like we have the Kathakali construct, also like that of Bharatnatyam, everything is large and loud because that is the way we are, and narratives are. In Tamanna, we made Tiku, human.

There are two different streams. One is the stream which is the dependable stream of the alternate cinema and one is the mainstream cinema which is on a bash entertainment where they don't like hijras. So no reverence for Hijras in the mainstream cinema, they are supposed to be something scary. But here, you are scared and you come to know, the film-maker takes you closer to the hijra.

6. When asked, people from the hijra community, said that they had strict rules where their hair should compulsorily be below the shoulder level but Tiku in Tamanna is shown completely different. What was the reason for it?

Tiku was an outsider among the Hijras. He considered himself, not a part of them. The hijras used to say thatTiku is an outsider. Tiku did not feel that he was a part of that community. He always felt that he was a lone wolf. He was an outsider among the outsiders. He did not seek the safety of the hijras that is why I liked him the most. He was on the fringe and he was on the fringe of the fringe.

Inferences

From the survey, it was observed that the Hijracommunity were against the portrayal of how Sadashiv behaved in the film. They said, as a coin has two sides, even people are of different kinds, but no one behaves this evil. Shayna, who had basic understanding of the film had said, Sadashiv did a fantastic performance in the entire movie and that the film was a hit back in those days. So his depiction in the film was the need of the character and therefore it was shown the way it was.

Moreover, when the hijras saw Tamanna, they were moved by the true story. He sets an example for the rest in the world. He finds ways and means to raise the girl Tamanna and this is what the hijras liked the most. They further added that the media doesn't understand them and therefore people have kinds of phobiasrelated to hijras. They are secluded from the mainstream society. However, they are slowly finding place in the Indian society but the depiction of hijras is just the same as it was in earlier days.

RQ1. How do transgender perceive their representation in the films?

The transgender feel that they are represented in a negative manner. When Sadak and Tamanna were shown to them, they said they cannot be wicked and lingo as Sadashiv (Maharani) because they cannot be wicked at any point in time. They are kind and humble by birth and people interpret them to be wrong. While in Tamanna, the hijras could relate them to Tiku, because he is genuine and has no vices like Maharani. He has no evil intentions like Maharani. Moreover, Tiku raises a child, fathers her and meets her needs like a mother.

RQ2. What are the similarities and differences in such perception of transgender as compared to that of the director?

The director, Mahesh Bhatt said that he liked the hijras and he was very comfortable working with them. Similarities of the representation of transgender and the director are more seen in Tamanna than in Sadak. The similarities in the perception of the director with that of the transgender are clearly reflected in Tamanna. The caring nature of the hijra, the sacrifices that Tiku does to raise Tamanna and the maternal love that he shows toward her was something that the hijras agreed to. Also there are differences in perceptions in both the films. Hijras, as per the community rules, have their hair below the shoulder which was not seen with Tiku in Tamanna. Also, there was a difference in opinion between the two when Tiku, being a hijra lived with men.

When asked the director if that was intentionally done, the director said that Tiku did not feel a part of the community. He was a lone wolf and an outsider amongst the outsiders. Also, there was a difference in opinion between the two when Tiku, being a hijra lived with men.

RQ3. What is the nature of similarities and differences of such representation?

The lifestyle of hijras is different as compared to what is shown in the films. The wicked and arrogant nature of Maharani in Sadak is not how hijras actually are in real life. The hijras could very much relate themselves to Tikku and considered him as a heroic figure. People relate themselves to an idealistic person. Here, Tiku was a heroic figure for the hijras. The audience understands the piece of art and then form their perceptions based on what they see. Also in Tamanna, the hijra, Tiku, lives with his male friends and not with the other hijras or females which is not accepted in the hijra community.

The portrayal of life stories and issues faced by hijras are identified by directors like Mahesh Bhatt and the director therefore brings people closer to this community which otherwise wouldn't have been possible. In films based on real life, like Tamannais an attempt to focus on the lives and experiences of the community rendered invisible by systemic homophobia and transphobia. Fear of loss of family and fear of violent consequences underlay many of the choices that hijras make, particularly those related to suppressing identity or disclosing it in non-explicit ways. When a hijra's identity is explicitly disclosed (forcibly and voluntarily), the family's reaction may be, if to accept the hijra or not. Emotional violence forms the foundation of the family's non-acceptance of the hijra identity.

The hijras are radical outspoken and a necessary part of the cosmos. As all other existing forms have a history of their own, the hijras too mark their existence since a long time. The portrayal of the hijra community in films needs to be more positive and frequent. There is a need of the media to get their hands on awareness campaigns and help the invisibles, get visibility. The media is a powerful tool. The degree of influence depends on the availability and pervasiveness of media. Instead of helping the cause of the hijra community by projecting them the way they are, the media has hampered it almost irreversibly by projecting them either as a dark and sinister group of people with criminal instincts, to be avoided at all costs, or as the laughing stock in films, and rarely with empathy and humanity. The hijra community is a close-knit one, their ways and habitat kept secret from even the closest of neighbors who nurse more hatred than fear for them but prefer not to show it. Directors should try and make films depicting their plight and the struggle they go through to let people know that they are one amongst us and need to be respected.

Synopsis of the Film-Tamanna (Released in 1997)

This film is based on a real story of a eunuch named Tiku (played by PareshRawal), a eunuch, the only child of yesteryear Bollywood actress Nazneen Begum. She has fallen upon hard times and is virtually destitute and dependent on Tiku, who does make-up/hair-dressing of Bollywood actresses. When she passes away, Tiku sits beside the coffin, with grief. This happened in the year 1975, at Mahim, Bombay. After the funeral, he sits under a tree, thinking that, after his mother's death, he has no reason to live and has no meaning of life. Soon after that, he witnesses a woman leaving a child in a garbage bin. Tiku picks up the girl, longing for human company, decides to keep her. He names her Tamanna and raises her, being her father. Tiku fathers the infant and gives her a life also knowing the fact that she was a reason for his being and that he shall take care of her like one of his own.

Tiku doesn't want Tamanna to find out that Tiku is a eunuch, so he sends her off to boarding school. Tiku manages to pay her tuitions by doing whatever possible in order to get the money for himself and Tamanna. When she completes school, she returns home to find Tiku in the guise of a hijra and shuns him, but subsequently relents. Then Tiku finds out that Tamanna (played by Pooja Bhatt) is the daughter of Ranvir Chopra, an up-coming politician. He promises her that he would support her to teach Chopra a lesson for his wrong acts. This film portrays the struggle, hardships and discrimination of transgenderin the society. The film 'evokes compassion rather than jeers'.

Synopsis of the Film-Sadak (Released in 1991)

Maharani (played by Sadashiv Amrapurkar) runs a brothel and is shown to be very wicked, dominating and greedy. Ravi (played by Sanjay Dutt), a taxi-driver meets Pooja (played by Pooja Bhatt) before she is bought to the brothel by her uncle, to keep her there, in place of his daughter who was apparently taken to the brothel by Sadashiv because Pooja's father and uncle owed a debt to him, and they could not pay the debts on time. In the film, Ravi's sister commits suicide after being forced to become a prostitute and he doesn't want Pooja to face similar situation as he is falling for her.

He decides to elope with her after stabbing Maharani. Somehow Maharani manages to find their whereabouts. The film ends with regular fight scene between the hero and the villain and then Ravi and Pooja live happily ever after.

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Chapter 16

Coverage of Television News Channels on Nirbhaya Case in India: An Analysis

Dr. K. John Babu

Abstract

Irrespective of the tough legislations and laws, rape cases and abuses are being increased in India. Denigration and even violence against woman are growing in exponential manner. The paper focuses on programmes of six Indian television news channels on Nirbhaya's rape and murder incident. It also shows how a clutch of television channels in India has allotted their prime time to provided knowledgeable debate, stimulate social movement, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, change overt behavior and finally formulate Nirbhaya law.

Introduction

We are indeed living in the age of media plenty. Television channels are veering towards infotainment today and cover most of the mass media in India. Television news channels also become multiple that did not exist before 1990. There was a criticism that television media is not trying to sensationalize the issue and not giving space to rational thought with a commitment to gender justice. Day K. Thussu (2005) observed "despite access to information from a wide variety of sources and heavy investment in the news sector as well as a more liberal regulatory environment, the news networks tend to go for what I may call the three Cs - celebrities, criminals and cricket". Instead, the major gender issues that media should focus can be traced under different forms such as: frequent human rights violations, delayed and denied justice for women. Attacks on women, gender discrimination and the subsequent inequality are the causes in society along with the other ills that contribute to gender crimes.

The entire nation was shocked and outraged at the inhuman gang rape of a 23-year-old paramedical student by a gang of six in a Delhi bus on December 16, 2012. The 24/7 anchors boiled the atmosphere during those days with their pronouncements and emotional assertions. The issue telecasted in televisions has grabbed the attention and eyeballs of the common people. News coverage in television has mobilized the mass to come of their homes and protest against the heinous crime. It reached a crescendo on December 30-31 because of the death of the 'braveheart' after struggling for life for more than a fortnight. It was banner news for almost all newspapers. At the same time, Indian Express newspaper has published first the profiles of seven accused with their background information.

When we see the television channels covered on incidents of murder of teen aged girl Arushi Talwar in Noida, after that rape and murder of Nirbhya in New Delhi, the focus of programmes of national and regional televisions were thrown to get people thinking and fight for the rights of women. When another incident of gang rape happened on photojournalist in commercial capital of India Mumbaiin 2013, television news channels have played a pivotal role in bringing the culprits arrest within a few days.

Literature reviewed

Before 1990, Indian television was under the monopoly of Doordharshan and news coverage on woman was also less.Krishnan, Dighe and Rao (1990), studied over a period of 15 days in 1986 with a sample of 363 telecasting items were scrutinized for women related references. Quantitative analysis indicated, "News related to women did not exceed 2.5 minutes out of the total 20 minutes. Women were news makers in less than ten per cent of the 30 news programmes telecast. They appeared frequently as members of audiences and as victims of some calamity or accident. Women feature in all categories of commercials, but they were dominated in advertisements for foods, grooming and household items".

After 1990, when television in India opened for foreign investors and to start by amateur private people, number of channels was increased. Out of competition channels including Doordarshan given priority for woman related issues in television programmes. Nandini Prasad, (1994) conducted content analysis of Doordarshan television programmes which was carried out in two and a half months (Oct 1 to Dec 15, 1992) using sample of 38 national news bulletins. Nandini found that a mere 20 news items during the entire period related to women. Of the 20 news items, 5 related to social issues. 3 to mobilizing public opinion on women's issues, and 11 to other women related issues. Danica Minic, (2010) studied on Gender Sensitive Journalism and Television media in Serbia and Croatia. The legislative, political and institutional activities with regard to problems such as violence against women or sex trafficking did result in them greater media coverage.

Method

Center for Media Studies (CMS) has track recording and monitoring equipment. CMS began their task of tracking and recording the prime time programmes on Nirbaya's rape and murder incident. A clutch of private television channels and the national broadcaster were whipped up the heinous incident allotting maximum prime time: 7-11 pm, from 17-31 December 2012. The digitally-recorded the news programmes of 15 days were captured, scanned and segregated for further analysis. This secondary data has been taken for the study of analyzing Delhi rape incident covered by national television channels.

Analysis: Television news channels on Delhi rape incident

Table 1: Delhi paramedical student gang rape case and Prime time in television channels

Channel	News stories	Time	Specials	Time	Total Time
Aaj Tak	33	200 min	41	904 min	1104 min
DD News	78	709 min	20	499 min	1208 min
Star News	225	300 min	31	626 min	926 min
Zee News	89	418 min	46	857 min	1275 min
CNN IBN	72	353 min	23	687 min	1040 min
NDTV 24x7	49	559 min	33	1439 min	1998 min
Total	546	2539 min	194	5012 min	7551 min

Source: CMS Media Lab

NDTV 24x7 has given highest time 1,998 minutes, with 26.46 per cent for news stories and specials and it was followed by Zee television with 1275 min, 16.88 per cent of time. Private channels, namely, Aaj Tak (1,104 minutes) and Zee News (1,275 minutes) and the national broadcaster, Doordarshan news were allotted 1, 208 minutes (20 Hours) in prime time (7-11 PM) to the incident of Delhi gang-rape.

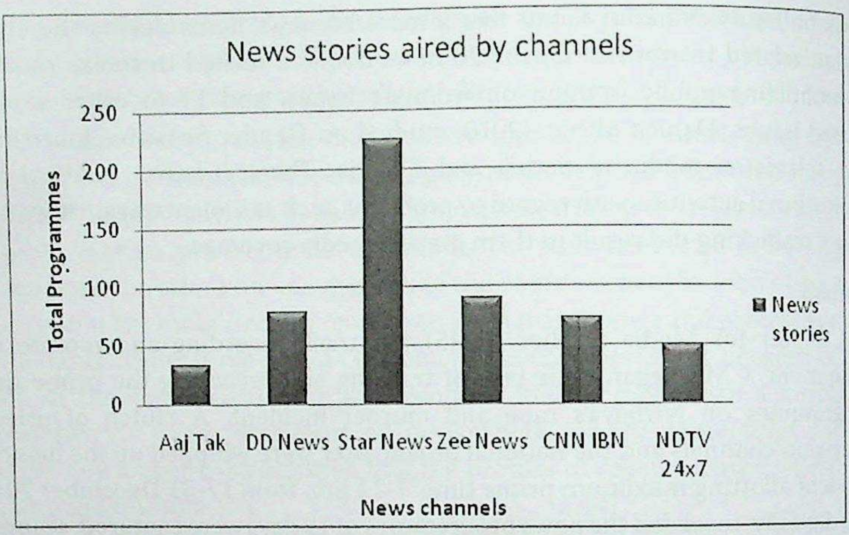

Figure: 1: Programmes aired on Delhi gangrape case and related Issues

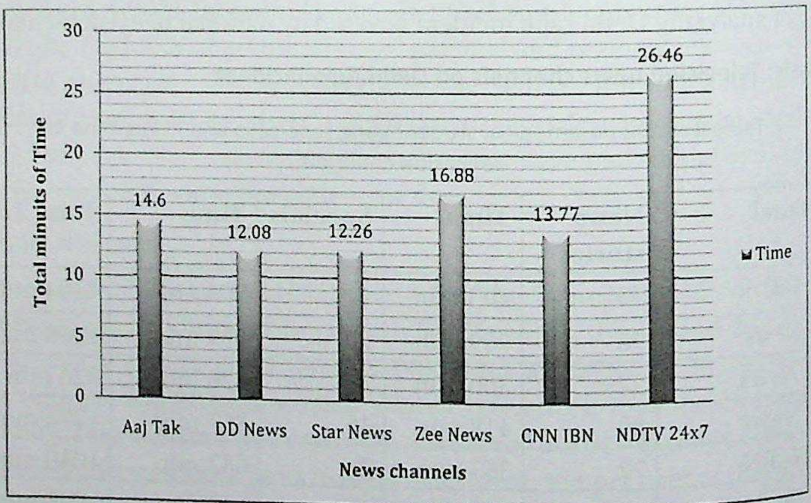

Figure: 2: Prime time allotted by the television channels on Delhi gangrape case and related Issues

Star News has given more news stories 225 with 300 mn of time. Doordarshan news channel has given coverage against the police inaction and government failure in this incident. In this regard, Prabhakar Kumar, the head of the CMS's Media Lab said that DD news coverage was live footage of the protests at India Gate and it is also countering attack from the private channels.

As far as media attention is concerned, Aarushi Talwar murder case is the instance that can compare to the Delhi rape incident. A Center for Media Studies' analysis done in June 2012 revealed that 42 per cent of prime time stretched over 23 days that six channels beamed news and special programmes on the double murder for 39.30 hours between May 16 and June 7, 2012. Delhi gang rape

Table 2: Coverage of women and girl children-related crime stories in March 2012 (Prime Time: 7-11 pm)

S.N	Story Topics	Aaj Tak		DD News		Zee News		Star News		CNN IBN		NDTV 24x7		Total	
		N	T	N	T	N	T	N	T	N	T	N	T	N	T
1.	Murder	13	51m	19	54m	24	40m	37	39m	19	11m	1	25sec	113	195m 25sec
2.	Rape	2	11m	3	8m	10	9m	5	5m	9	6m	3	7m	32	46m
3.	Molestation	3	2m	5	11m	3	4m	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	17m
4.	Torture	6	28m	-	-	-	-	12	36m	2	40sec	1	3m	21	67m 40sec
5.	Corporal Punishment	-	-	-	-	3	6m	5	4m	-	-	-	-	8	10m
6.	Dowry	1	30sec	7	25m	-	-								

Note: N is for number of news stories and T for total time in minutes.

incident, on which 252 hours devoted, is almost six times higher than Aarushi Talwar murder case. While the Aarushi case had elements of pulp fiction with a mysterious twist, in the Delhi rape case, the motive was never in doubt.

Conclusion

George Gerbner (1980) mass media researcher, coined a word 'mainstreaming', whereby television programmes create a coming together, a convergence of attitude among viewers. Studies said that television has tremendous impact on attitude formation among the people. In Nirbhaya incident, the study shows that many of the talk shows and panel discussions find as highly mainstreamed the people. The way television channels keep focusing on the demand for death penalty and chemical castration actually influences public opinion in a regressive manner. It also lend a handed for 'quick justice,' and form fast track courts' for fair trial standards. In this incident, television channels had played pivotal role in making more sensitize towards woman related acts, programmes, schemes and entitlements as this would go a long way in changing perceptions for the better towards the gender justice.

Television channels must continue disseminating message of women rights. Content could be carefully crafted so that over-dramatization can be avoided. Victim's identity in issues such as molestation and rape need to be protected. Language news channels should initiate to generate programmes on gender sensitive issues in the lines of Amir Khan's programme Satyameva Jayate in Star TV, for which the help of cine celebrities and sponsors can be taken. Journalists and Technical experts working on gender sensitive programmes in television should be acknowledged and awarded.

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Section IV

MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

Chapter 17

Media at the Receiving End: Human Rights Violations and Attacks on Journalists

Dr. G. Anita

Abstract

The aim of this article is to discuss cases of attacks and violation of basic human rights such as right to life and right to freedom of speech and expression and heightening the problems faced by journalists in India and around the world. Over these years, many journalists have losttheir lives for the cause of the profession. During 2013, press freedom has suffered major restrictions in numerous countries around the world and high-profile attack cases were reported in countries like Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Russia and also India. Among various countries the status of the journalists, their problems at the field level are varied. Without any discrimination developed, developing and conflict ridden countries have been posing threat to the lives of many of them. Stringent laws and their succinct implementation would help in imposing faith in journalists and curb impending dangers of gross violation of their rights.

Introduction

Human rights exist, and are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the entire body of international human rights law. Though they are recognized by many countries and form the heart of many national constitutions real situation in the world is far distant from the ideals envisioned in the Declaration. Article 19 of UNDHR freedom of expression says "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."Russia repressed political dissent, pressured or shut down independent media and harassed nongovernmental organizations. Peaceful public demonstrations were dispersed with force, and lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists were threatened and attacked. In Iraq, at least 37 Iraqi employees of media organizations were killed in 2008 and 235 since the invasion of March 2003, making the country as the world's most dangerous place for journalists.

Frank La Rue, expert on freedom of opinion and expression and ChristofHeynsopined that attacks on journalists are akin to attack on democracy (unmultimedia, 2012). These United Nations Human Rights experts have decried the high number journalists killed or subjected to inhuman treatment in the course of their duties. They called upon countries to take punitive measures to protect journalists and media freedom. In their reports to the UN Human Rights Council they said journalists have been increasingly subjected to grave human rights violations such as receiving death threats, arbitrary arrests, torture and killings, and sexual violence against female journalists. According to them, "on-line journalists and bloggers are also not left behind as they face additional forms of harassment, intimidation and censorship. An attack against a journalist is not only a violation of his or her right to impart information, but also a violation of the right of individuals and society at large to seek and receive information and ideas of all kinds. This tendency was attributed to the failure of the governments who could not take effective preventive measures. They are also criticized for their unwillingness or inability to investigate and prosecute those responsible that continues to fuel violence against journalists."

The UNESCO-2010 report notes that "sadly, the frequency of acts of violence against journalists is increasing. In most cases, impunity precludes the way of justice, and if this trend prevails, journalists will remain easy targets. Needless to say, this represents a severe threat to freedom of expression and to our ability to seek the truth."

Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists and among the ones with the highest levels of unsolved crimes against the press. Though the exact figures of those killed are often conflicting, press freedom organizations around the world agree through general consensus that, Mexico is among the most dangerous countries on the planet to exercise journalism as a profession. Nearly 100 media workers have been killed or disappeared since 2000, and most of these crimes remained unsolved, improperly investigated, and with few perpetrators arrested and convicted.

In China since the 1990s, there have been spates of unsolved attacks against journalists and media owners who are not aligned with the China Government. In 1996, journalist was stabbed; in 1998, radio talk show host Journalist was stabbed by a group of thugs while leaving his office. In June 2013, Chen Ping, the publisher of iSun Affairs, a weekly magazine banned on the mainland, was beaten by two men armed with batons.

In Philippines since Corazon Aquino took office, at least 17 journalists have been killed, five in crossfire, four were targeted by the Communist-backed New People's Army, and four were killed after criticizing the military or corrupt local officials. One journalist was killed by a vigilante during an argument about communism. Details on three additional cases are inconclusive.

According to Michel Wieviorka (1997) terrorists' manipulation and exploitation of the media is shown to play a crucial part in their propaganda war. The European committeereport, "Concepts of terrorism" (2008) opined that it is important to emphasize, that the complexity of terrorism against media combined with the unique attributes of individual groups. In this context the researcher tried to find out the status of safety and threat to the lives of journalists across the world.

Objectives

The researcher tried to know:

- The number of cases reported about attacks on media personnel
- The challenges faced by media personals in day to day life.
- How a case of crime against media persons was dealt when it is compared with a case against a common man.
- Up to what extent a media person is leading their life without bowing down to the crime.

Analysis and Findings

To meet above objectives a qualitative analysis of cases of attacks on journalists was carried out by the researcher. The study has focused on issues from January, 2013 to December, 2013. At the national level, 6 cases of serious attacks on journalists were reported among which 3 cases were kilings of joruanlists and the rest 3 are attakcs on them. At international level 29 cases which inclued 3 cases of killings and 25 cases of attacks were reported from various countires in the world. A closer look at the dangers facing journalists examines the state of the media in selected countries and highlights the efforts being made to improve press freedom in various nations support the matter.

The media freedom watchdog,'Reporters without Borders' (2013) has noted a decrease in number of journalists killed across the world in the course of duty. But it says the toll is still high compared with previous years. The situation of journalists has deteriorated since the restoration of democratic rule in Pakistan, reveals Amnesty International in its new report 'A bullet has been chosen for you - attack on journalists in Pakistan(2014).

Four journalists have been attacked in Zimbabwe which was condemned by the press freedom watchdog, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). Freelance reporter Paul Pindani was abducted by three masked men, gagged, severely assaulted and left for dead by unknown assailants in Chinhoyi. More than 100 cases of physical violence against journalists in Ukraine were registered in 2013, according to the Institute of Mass Information data. Dozens of journalists have been killed or disappeared while reporting on the conflict in Syria. Despite its rapid growth in the post-Taliban era, Afghan media continues to face many challenges such as attacks on journalists and political interference that threaten to undo the progress made over the past decade (2014). At least five journalists have been killed as militants attacked an Iraqi TV channel headquarters in Tikrit, North of Baghdad.

In the month of January,2013 highly important news regarding attacks on media prevailed wherein Karachi 3 staffers were killed in attack on Express TV channels. Next day, Pakistan Taliban claimed to be responsible for deadly attack on TVchannel. Musharraf apologized for attack on TV. "Offices of the local Express newspaper and television channel were apparently the target of the attack, which wounded at least three people. The building houses staff of the Express News channel, Daily Express Urdu newspaper and The Express Tribune English newspaper. This is the second attack on the office in four months. In the same month Ukraine Media also came under attack. In the next month, OSCE Media freedom representative alarmed by another attack on newspaper in Montenegro, Vienna, in March Hong Kong ex-editor stabbed as fears grow for media freedom. For two months, no cases of attacks were reported and again in June at international level journalists suffered heavily. TV channel offices were attacked in Libya's Benghazi. Seven journalists were killed in attack on Television Station in Syria; Two Injured in Attack on TV Station in Pakistan June 27. In November Sri Lankan Tamil journalist was captured, killed in Colombo. Gunmen Attack Offices of Pakistani Media Group in Karachi on December 2. In the same monthmilitants attacked Iraqi TV channel HQ, and killed five journalists in Iraq whereas in Congo Gunmen attacked DRC's state TV at international airport.

In India

India is ranked at 140 out of 179 countries in the 2013 "Reporters without Borders", Press freedom index. In India violent attacks on Singur peasants by the police during their protest against the forced acquisition of their land for an automobile project in the Hooghly district, West Bengal on 2 December 2006 raised questions on freedom and security of journalists. On December 8, the Srirampur police brutally attacked unarmed peaceful protesters near Sheoraphully Railway Station, Hooghly district, injuring several protesters, journalists and cameramen.

In 2013, police raided the office of Bengali daily 'Inqilab' and detained three journalists of the newspaper, known for its sensationalism. The police have also sealed the daily's printing press, seized some computers and printing equipment, journalists of the daily, which supports radical Islamists, claimed. A case was filed against the editor, publisher, chief reporter and a reporter under the Information, Communication and Technology Act, and under the Penal Code for publishing "provocative and false news" item claiming that Indian troops had assisted the operations of joint forces in western Satkhira.

At Hyderabad in April, MAA TV channel office was attacked by television artistes, who were on an agitation, demanding a ban on telecast of dubbed serials in television channels. Tension prevailed for some time as the protestors hurled stones damaging the glass façade and some vehicles parked on the premises. The 'Telugu Television Parishrama Pariraskhana Samithi' is spearheading the agitation launched a few days ago. They argue that the serials dubbed from other languages were depriving local talent of their livelihood and were also affecting the Telugu language and culture.

Journalists were attacked by police in Kashmir and later Internet and 3G services were suspended in the state. Reporters Without Borders is appalled by the violence that members of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) used against two employees of the English-language daily "*Rising Kashmir*", Mohammad Jaffar and Abdul Qayoom, in Peerbagh, in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 20 July, 2013. Internet and 3G mobile networks were blocked in Jammu and Kashmir on 18 July after members of the Border Security Force (BSF) shot six demonstrators during a protest against the BSF's recent intrusion into a mosque.

In November three people from the media were attacked in West Bengal, allegedly by Trinamool Congress workers in the last month of the year 2013. Three people from the media have been reportedly attacked in Barrackpore in West Bengal, allegedly by workers from the Trinamool Congress. In [illegible] photographer Gyandev Lokhande was attacked by members of the Congress Party in Betul, in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, while taking photos at a candidate selection meeting. Violence plagued journalists in northeastern Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh, including four attacks on the Arunachal Times. Tongam Rina, a columnist was attacked.

The International Press Institute (IPI)also reiterated its concern over a series of deadly assaults on Indian journalists. According to Manish Nepal (2014), Indian journalists faced many attacks during their discharging of duties.On August 24, a journalist with a Hindi daily was shot dead in Etawah, home district of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. Two days before to that on August 22,a woman photojournalist working for an English magazine in Mumbai was raped by five persons in Shakti Mills compound of Mahalaxminagar area of the city. The gang-rape in India's commercial capital, Mumbai on August, 2013 is indicative of the dangers media persons have to face on a daily basis. Gang rape incident shockedIndia as journalist is attacked while she was on assignment in middle-class Mumbai suburb. The woman photo journalist who was found in an abandoned textile mill in one of the city's fastest-growingwas later taken to hospital.

In July Officers of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Peerbagh in Kashmir assaulted journalists of English daily "*Rising Kashmir*". On May 19three masked assailants stormed into the office of the *DainikGanadoot*, a Bengali daily and stabbed manager of the newspaper Ranjit Choudhary, proof-reader Sujit Bhattacharjee, and driver with the newspaper Balaram Ghosh. A journalist's body was found on February 12 in Chhattisgarh. Freelancer Nemi Chand Jain's body was recoveredin morning after he had left his home for Nama village in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh.

Conclusion

Media should be interactive in information sharing instead of playing politicking media. A journalist should be free from all the other pressures. It should be friendly culture inside and outside the organization, all the facilities should be made available for welfare of the journalists according to their experience in the field of journalism by the organization and also by the government. The official data and secrecy source should be maintained and revealed about the journalists in the cases of in security and where threat is high to the media personals. Corrupted and political party leaders should not take rid of journalism as a painting brush to brush on others negatives. Media should be free from all illegal pressures.

Suggestions

The researcher makes the following suggestions to stop attacks against journalists.

- Press persons should always stand by the guiding principle of objectivity and try to report facts as they are.
- Government should make stringent laws to protect journalists as healthy media is necessary for successful functioning of democracy.
- Public should also extend support to uphold responsibility to protect the rights of journalists.
- Journalists also should take self protective measures and should be able to rescue themselves in tough times
- Government should provide special security and protective measures to journalist and media during sensitive times and issues.
- Human activism founders should identify and support local experts in communities of the attack sites, since defending against attacks requires not only technical skill but also other skills.
- Human rights funders should consider funding a coordinator to identify both local experts for human rights communities and core network organizations willing to help human rights victims, activists, independent media organizations and human rights groups with a view towards trying to stop the attacks on media.

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Chapter 18

New Media and Democratic Rights

Dr. Mangesh Karandikar

Abstract

This paper explores the concept of the possibility of new media as a space for encouraging democratic participation. With the younger population in India adopting the Internet and the mobile phones as their primary means of communication, this paper puts a case study in which two girls from a town in India were arrested for writing on social media against a general shut down enforce by a political party. The paper also looks at ambiguity in the law which makes the possibility of the new media becoming an ideal platform for democratic participation seem remote.

Keywords: New Media, democracy, public sphere, Internet, mobile phones.

Introduction

In India, Facebook is the most popular social media site, and has the largest user base in the world, next only to the United States. It has been enthusiastically embraced by the digital natives as well as digital immigrants across the country (Prensky, 2001). It also comes with its own set of problems. In March 2013, two young women from Palghar, a small town in Maharashtra, India, were arrested under Sections 295 of the IPC (intent to outrage religious feelings) and Section 66A of the IT Act, on a complaint filed by a local leader of a political party for apparently hurting their religious sentiments. This is because the girls wrote against a bandh (a general shutdown of a region or a city) enforced by the political party, on Facebook. Activists from the political party also ransacked her uncle's dispensary and operation theatre. In this article I will explore the concept of democracy, and the concept of New Media and democratic rights, keeping this incidence at the centre of my arguments. Let us first look at that the Constitution says, and what the word 'democracy' means.

The Constitution of India and Fundamental Rights

The preamble of the Constitution of India says that India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic country,and Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution states that we have the right to freedom of speech and expression, (Constitution.org, 2014).

If India is democratic and if we have the right to freedom of speech, why were the two women arrested for making a comment on the wastefulness of a bandh? This is because Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, popularly called the Cyber Law states the following:

66A. Punishment for sending offensive messages through communication service, etc.

Any person who sends, by means of a computer resource or a communication device,—

(a) any information that is grossly offensive or has menacing character; or

(b) any information which he knows to be false, but for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred or ill will, persistently by making use of such computer resource or a communication device,

(c) any electronic mail or electronic mail message for the purpose of causing annoyance or inconvenience or to deceive or to mislead the addressee or recipient about the origin of such messages, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and with fine.

If India is a democracy, the two women were perfectly within their rights to voice their concern about the wastefulness of a shut down. However, apparently, the law seems to contradict itself. On the one hand, the Constitution gives us the right to freedom of speech, while on the other, the ambiguity in the IT Act allows one to interpreted the law based on personal whims and feelings. We also need to look at what the word 'democracy' means.

What does the Word 'Democracy' Mean?

The word democracy has been conveniently interpreted as the right to vote. In a study, Ober has analysed the word 'democracy'. The origin of the word 'democracy' is Greek, a combination of demos (the people) and kratos (power), thus meaning 'the power of the people', which, in turn, means 'majority rule' or rule by the people or their elected representatives. It is generally construed as the power to vote and elect a government. However, Ober (2008) discusses how the word 'democracy' actually means 'capacity to do things' and not just 'majority rule'. It is the power to be able to participate in the democratic process of a country, and not just power to vote a popular government to power.

In a democracy, every citizen has a right to freedom of expression. This also means that one can express without the fear of any repercussions and without the fear of authority, and that the citizen and the authority are on an equal platform during these exchanges. In short, in a democracy, all citizens have equal right to voice their concerns, and to speak their mind. This is Habermasian concept of the *Public Sphere.*

Public Sphere

Habermas's public sphere is a space in a democratic society where individuals could come together for a discourse in matters of mutual interest, where there were no class distinctions and assertion of authority, and where political participation was encouraged. The public sphere is a concept born out of the reality of societies that coexist despite having differences. It constitutes a social space where democratic reasoning is possible with the help of informal interactions. The Habermasian concept of the public sphere is based on European concepts of democracy, based on a society which was both, unicultural and monolingual. The public sphere, according to Habermas, is an idealized form of public reasoning (Dahlberg, 2006). The role of media as a public sphere is of prime importance in promoting free speech and expression. However, the media also limited by their compulsions to stay afloat in a fast developing, changing economy. In today's scenario, the media are prone to cater to the politicians, and the government, and taking care of their own commercial interests, rather than catering to the public agenda. The politicians and the government too, use the media for their benefit, putting their political agenda before the public agenda. What could be a cause of this shift in balance towards commerce?

The traditional media – the newspapers, the radio and the television –are bound by limitations of space, time and finance. The present day democracy demands more than what it used to earlier. This is because of the emergence and consolidation of the new economy. The emergence of new media – the Internet and mobile phone, along with the social media sites - is the result or even maybe the catalyst that led to the making of the new economy, necessitating a restructuring of our concept of media. It is possible that the emergence of new media and its popularity has been a result of the limitations of the traditional media to fulfil the desires of the people especially in lending space to form a public sphere. The new media – the Internet and the mobile phones are inherently networked, in turn, providing the facility for the people to network with each other. With rapid advances in technology, the new media are available literally in the hands of the people. It is easier to generate content, and even easier to make it available to a large number of people on the network. Since the new media enable networking, allowing people to discuss, debate and exchange ideas, is it possible that the Internet and the new media constitute a public sphere?

The Internet, by itself, is incapable of distinguishing between caste, creed, class, or religion, thus making it a platform enabling an equal status and opportunity to all those who use it (Mazzoleni & Shultz, 1999). These qualities of the Internet and the new media have made them extremely popular with the public. The political parties across the world and also in India, especially during the recently held general elections, have exploited the power of the Internet to encourage political participation of the public. Several scholars have studied the utility of the Internet in enabling political participation.

New Media and Political Participation

There is a positive relationship between the Internet and political participation (Weber, Loumakis, & Bergman, 2003) and a trend towards increasing dependence on Internet-based mobilization (Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Mahéo, 2011). Discussions on social networks (Mckenzie, 2004; Stanley & Weare, 2004) and blogs (De Zúñiga, Puig-I-Abril, & Rojas, 2009) also encourage political participation. The fact that the Internet readily provides information readily encourages the youth to participate in the democratic process of the country (Polat, 2005; Seongyi & Woo-Young, 2011; Kaye & Johnson, 2002), thus creating a stronger relationship with the digital natives and participation than that of the traditional media (Bakker & de Vreese, 2011; Gibson, 2008). The interactivity (Dominic & Horrocks, 2001; Abramson, Arterton, & Orren, 2012; Bucy, 2009; Stromer-Galley, 2000; Rafaeli, 1988), and hypertextualilty (Small, 2008), networking features (Han, 2007), afforded by the Internet encourages political participation. The facility to create content

(Lilleker & Jackson, 2010; Orr, 2007; Fernandez, 2006) and to register protest publicly on social issues (Meijer, Burger, & Ebbers, 2009) are other features of the Internet that encourage public participation. Lastly, the Internet also provides a platform for self expression to the socially excluded groups, which helps them to participate in the public sphere (Ward, Gibson, & Lusoli, 2003). Thus, the Internet does enable political participation in the electoral process. One presumes that if political participation is enabled, it also leads to democratic participation, becoming a public sphere. But does the Internet really constitute a public sphere?

The Internet as a Public Sphere

The interactivity and networking provided by the Internet were greeted with euphoria, and several studies pointed out its importance as a public sphere. They asserted that the Internet does indeed constitute a public sphere, and though the Internet makes one rethink the original concept of the public sphere by Habermas, it does have a potential to be counted as one (Boeder, 2005; Kazi, 2005; Gordon, 2009).

However, on further analysis, scholars have advised to exercise caution before branding the Internet as an ideal public sphere. Papacharissi (2002) doubts whether the Internet could be really a public sphere, especially in a globalized world where rather than creating a new political culture, the Internet-based technologies could adapt themselves to the present ones. Papacharissi also says that just because the Internet technology affords free speech, it does not automatically become a public sphere. Another study found that internet communication is similar to debates conducted offline in the print media (Gerhards & Schäfer, 2009). Dahlgren (2005) questions the utility of the Internet as a public sphere, at the same time asserting that this new medium cannot be ignored and has a potential to enable public discourse. Dahlberg (2001) discusses how disparity in accessibility of Internet limits the ability of the Internet to be useful as a public sphere. Other studies discuss how the new, networked public spheres could be transnational, temporary and subaltern and emphasis that further studies are needed to declare the Internet is a public sphere (Aslama & Erikson, 2009; Dahlberg, 2004). Rong (2014) discusses how the policy makers too need to adopt the ICT to make it a public sphere. Another study shows how over-regulation, media dependency, digital divide, low social capital, and lack of media literacy could hamper the growth of new media as a platform for open political discourse (Liu, 2007). Mark Poster clearly says that the Internet should not be viewed as a public sphere and more studies are required before it is accepted as one (Poster, 2004). In India too, with the mobile phones, the use of Internet is spreading faster than expected. How has India adapted to the idea of using the Internet as a public sphere?

The Internet as a Public Sphere in India

Though there are contrasting views about the Internet being a public sphere, there is indeed a possibility,because the Internet allows anonymous posting of content, and because it is free (almost), it could become a platform of fearless interaction. Ideally, in a multicultural environment, despite the diversity in culture and the polarized societies, likeminded people from all sects would be able to come together even if it is on the Internet, virtually, using it as a public sphere. One can cite the example of the anti-corruption and Lok Pal movement stated by Anna Hazare (Wikipedia, 2011), or the Pink Chaddi campaign started by Nisha Susan and others, (Chasing IAMB, 2011) to raise a voice against the high handedness of Sri Ram Sene in Mangalore. Public sphere is a democratic space, where issues can be debated at alocal as well as national level, and get sorted out democratically, even though they do not get exposure by the traditional media. Can the Internet be used in this manner? What would be the repercussions of posting a status on the Facebook, speaking out one's mind?

Let us re-look at the case mentioned in the beginning of this chapter about the two women who were arrested for protesting against a bandh on Facebook. What was undemocratic in this case? The girls posting on Facebook, the party protesting, and calling for a bandh were all democratic acts. However, enforcing the bandh and the activists ransacking the operating theatre were undemocratic acts. All this happened just because of a seemingly innocent post on Facebook. The apparently free and equal platform for a democratic social discourse led to a traumatic experience for the two girls and their families. What do the youngsters think about posting on the social media site, especially after the incident?

The researcher has conducted a quick survey to try to understand how people use the social media and whether they think it is a democratic space for discourse. I put up a post on my Facebook timeline, and requested my friends on Facebook to click on a link to fill up a very short form. The form contained exactly two questions, with five options each. The population was all my 'Facebook' friends. All those who responded to this request were my sample. A simple analysis of the data showed the following results:

Question 1: If you find a topic (any topic), being discussed on an open Internet platform, like the Facebook, and if you don't agree to the opinion of the majority, would you...

Options	Percentage
Argue vehemently against the majority opinion	37
Say something against and then remain quiet despite opposing views	29
Hesitate before saying something	11
Will avoid getting into the discussion	19
Simply not bother. Why get ridiculed by so many people?	04

Question 2: You feel very strongly about an issue. It could be about a political party, leader, religion, community, rituals, caste, reservation, vote banks, elections......Will you write about it, be candid, even critical, on an open platform like Facebook, Twitter, etc.?

Options	Percentage
My country is a democracy, right? Of course, I will!	18
Yes, I will, but will choose words carefully.	56
I am not sure.	11
No, I won't.	12
Of course not. I would rather not face repercussions offline, endangering my family and me.	03

Both the tables show that there is a tendency towards avoiding speaking out on the social media. In the first table, though there are 37% responses saying that they would argue and oppose a popular opinion, there overall there seems to be a tendency to avoid any confrontation. In the second table too, more people seem to tend to be careful before they write anything on the social media. People would rather remain silent than oppose a majority opinion, (Noelle-Neumann, 2008).

Overall, it seems that there is a tendency to avoid speaking out candidly on social issues. Has the Palghar incidence made people apprehensive about using the Internet and the social media? How can one say that the Internet and the new media are democratic in nature? What is the basic problem, apart from the legal repercussions and the lack of access?

The Law and the Digital Divide

Apart from the ambiguity in the law, the second problem could be the digital divide that still prevails in India. India has taken rapid strides in the field of Information and Communication Technologies and has a fairly well developed ICT infrastructure. Though successive governments since the 1980's have encouraged the use of ICTs, the progress has not been fast enough. There has been substantial change in this scenario in the last few years, with the mobile technologies being adopted by a large section of the society. However, merely by connecting people over networks and giving them the ability to interact and by providing them means to access more information does not mean that it would lead to a more democratic society,(Ward I., 1997).

The digital nature of the new media has helped in creating transmedial content. In a very short span of about 20 years, the disruptive power of new media have created imbalances in the power structures around the world. Innis ((1951) states that new technologies affects the perception and understanding of power and that "shifts to new media of communication have been characterized by profound disturbances." Though it has been adopted as the medium of choice for communication, there are still large number of people who still have no access to new media. McLuhan says that more information means more connectivity. He also explains how, with electricity, we have extended our central nervous system to form a global village. Further, Jean Baudrillard states "Everywhere socialization is measured by the exposure to media messages. Whoever is under exposed to the media is desocialized or virtually unsocial." Which means that those who do not have access are not connected to the rest of the world which do have access to the network. Since they are unable to reply on the new media platform, they resort to the traditional means of retaliation, which they have practiced for hundreds of years before the new media were born.

This brings us back to the case of the two women arrested for posting on Facebook. The seemingly innocuous post led not only to their arrest, their uncle's dispensary was ransacked. The two women and their families were traumatized for a long period till February 2013, when the cases against them were dropped. However, it is far from over for the two women as the politician who had complained has decided to pursue the matter in the High Court against their acquittal.

Thus, at this stage, the new media platform appears just a simulation of democracy. With the traditional media devoted to representing the people in power, or interested more in commercial gains, and the social media becoming more and more a dangerous place for frank debates, it seems that a true democratic platform for fearless interaction and debate does not exist. With the law contradicting itself, and the digital divide, it will take time for India and Indians to call the Internet and the new media a public sphere. Though the political parties seem to show a tendency towards adopting the new media for communicating and connecting with the public directly, they do it more for political gains rather than encouraging democratic participation. At this stage, new media is only a representation of democracy, limited to people who have access to it. Unless the digital divide is reduced, it will remain a mere simulacrum of democracy, with the even the notion of democracy lost in the cool, smooth surfaces of computer screens.

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Chapter 19

Visual Media, Mass Orgy and Human Rights: A Critical Analysis of Television News Channels in Kerala

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Keywords: Voyeuristic pleasure, Erotic pleasure, Mass Psyche, Pornocentric, Imago

Abstract

The visual media in an age of the high waves of postmodernism tends to give us a phantasmagorical notion of reality created through the employment of technology. Indeed it helps us in diverse ways in the dissemination of knowledge, sharing of information and most significantly in the promotion of human rights in the modern world which, despite its definite national and international systems to ensure and protect human rights, is also an amphitheatre of the violation of the human rights as well. The female body, when used in the media as an object of male gaze in a patriarchal strategy to please the male erotic fixation, always opens novel pastures to the discourse on the violation of human right. So do the visual media narratives of the Kerala Solar Panel Scam. How does the scam become popular and what are the areas of human rights the media is supposed to have violated from an ethical and social constructivist perspective are discussed from a psycho social perspective.

Introduction

There is no mistake of exaggeration to say that we will certainly be wonderstruck to give a significantly serious thought to the way commendable and creative changes took over the mass media in its distinctively identifiable branches at an unbelievable pace. Simply put, it keeps us excited to absorb the past through a promisingly sophisticated and dignified linguistic narrative and through a dynamic visual narrative technique of which the magical pulchritude of the event is immersed in its pleasing faculty. It can easily be acknowledged and discerned that the mass media has grown to be an inevitable medium and channel through which it is quite cushy to reproduce with mechanics the factual events so as to influence the human perceptibility firmly. It is mostly true to say that the human perception in the post modern world with its highly cherished virtual reality has irretrievably lost its natural quest for the actuality of events. The gulf between the mechanical production of events and their correspondence with the reality is sometimes found as incapable to be bridged even in imagination. Ideologically the media is said to be ticketed for directing the masses towards the actuality of incidents through various methods and mechanics. It is praiseworthy that the visual media, as an inseparable part of the whole body of mass media, plays a significantly crucial part in our world by capturing events for the masses across the world with an amazingly designed narrative technique in which the highly sophisticated "virtual parole" is its quintessence.

The visual media in its function of artistic presentation of the events as termed as news makes the multitude of on lookers excited, anxious and pleased. Of excitement, anxiety and pleasure: the very fundamental elements based on which the visual media has turned to come into being, pleasure should be accounted with most priority. As Freud has already put it that all human action is resulted from the pleasure principle, it shall need to be said correct with the expected aesthetic politics of the visual media too. The visual media revolves round the pleasure principle. In visual media to present means to please. It is highly challenging to the hands behind and in the media to do two equally important things at a time: present the events and please the mass with a constellation of varying ideas and prejudices. When visual media has got to do two important things simultaneously, it should be noted that it has to do it excellently well without failing in any of it. So it might turn to focus more on the pleasure element.

Postmodern Visual Reality and the Mass Psyche

The term 'postmodernism' is broadly accepted as a vibrant umbrella term to cover and define the most lively features and tendencies that always are found with the discourses pertaining to each and every modes of human life with its social cultural, linguistic, as well as economic and scientific existence in the current world especially after second world war. Typically designed structural methodological variants are currently at use in the multimedia world to mould and frame the utopian reality of the actuality and in the presentation of which, from the mass spectators perspective, the unreal is pleasing beyond boundaries to be taken for the real. Thus the multimedia fantastically fabricates a simulacrum of the reality to push the mass psyche in to a totally artistic but artificial dilemma where it is always found with the same mass psyche to be infatuated with the fantastic, for its quite human that he believes what he sees: it is not intellect rather emotion that works. The mass psyche is caught in the dilemma and soon makes the marriage with the distorted and improper but majorly pleasing visual pastiche of the event. In this highly caught-up situation as the masses experiencing the event over television or any other substitute, their mind would become the unreal incarnate. There lies a crucially destructive problem: the knowledge of the actual event the masses amassing thus would be "twice removed from reality"(Plato qtd. in Prasad B 1965)

As the mass psyche in the current multimedia engulfed world has been immensely easy to be misdirected toward the psychedelic reality in lieu of the actual, the political power strategy from the global scenario to the national and regional having their social and cultural prejudices successfully continues to carry out its hidden aims and objectives. It is certain that it's through the cunning and effective manifestation of discourses over the visual media the construct of Islamophobia: a Eurocentric discourse to get the rest of the world turning against the Islamic nations of the middle east, terrorism and Maoism in India have come into being to a considerable extant. Of course, the existence of these in actuality can never be treated by turning back to it but the gorgeous notions of these that have been internalised by the masses at large across the world through visual media should invite a more critical attention and analysis. This internalising process reaches its treble through the incessant narratives the visual media demonstrates through its linguistic and visual narratives.

Mass Media in Kerala

In India the state which is paradoxically called God's own country, Kerala, has a greatly appreciated and deeply cherished tradition of mass media. Media in Kerala includes newspaper, television, radio and other visual and print mediums that help dissemination of news, information, knowledge, views and entertainment to the people with supposedly a didactic purpose. The state of Kerala has the highest literacy in the country and for attaining which, it is doubtless, the media in the state has played the vital wow factor.

Print Media

Dating back to 1578, when *The Doctrina Christian*, written by Fr Henrique, was printed, it marched to the glorious heights of postmodern visual culture through the establishment of press by Benjamin Bailey in the year 1821. The first newspaper, called *Rajyasamacharam*, was published in June 1847 in Thalasseri by the Christian missionaries of Basel Mission. The newspaper was mainly focused on religious aspect. Later in October of the same year *Paschimodayam* was printed and then in the next year came Njananikshepam. In the year 1890 Kerala witnessed the most transcending and socially and culturally integrating effort in the field of newspaper history of the state with the inception of Malayala Manorama by Kandathil Varghese Mappillai. Initially it was a weekly paper, later in 1928 it started to be circulated as a daily. *Kerala Kaumudi*, another newspaper, was started in 1911 with a promising political purpose of supporting the national independence movement of the country. It was also a weekly paper at the beginning and was later converted into a daily. At present, Kerala state is said to have more than 1000 newspapers sharing diverse pieces of news with a heterogeneous multitude of readers stretching across disparate social classes and groups. Some of the leading newspapers in the state are Madhyamam Daily, *Kerala Kaumadi,Deshabhimani, Mathrubhumi, Hindustan Times, Deepika, Malayala Manorama, Metro Vaartha, Indian Express, Chandrika, The Hindu and Varthamanam.*

It is astonishing to ponder over the pivotal role the mass media played in pioneering social and political reforms in the state during 19th and early 20th centuries. Be it the National Freedom Movement, the social reformist movement led by Sri Narayana Guru, or Communist movement led by E.M.S Namboodirippad that ultimately came to power in the state through ballot vote; they all had been possible through an effervescent media platform that stayed efficaciousin spreading their most secular and conscientizing social, cultural, and political ideologies to educate, liberate and galvanize the whole society of Kerala against its social, cultural and economic backwardness. The strategic methods and innovations the state media field is highly indebted to in the last twenty five years are worth mentioning in its role of making the state a consumer society.

Electronic media

A constant urge of Kerala society to gather information about events happening at all levels of society, in turn, paved way for the emergence of a social-oriented visual media culture in the state. The local, national and international issues discoursed on the visual media started to get a powerful platform of a sound and profound discussion in Kerala.

Television, the most important part of the media culture of the state today, offers both public and private television channels catering to the eclectic tastes of the people. Doordarshan, the state public channel, launched in 1985 in Trivandrum, along with many a private channel offers a vast options of vivid programmes the upshot of which one can choose the channels as per one's requirements and politics of watching. In the year 1993, Asianet entered as the first private group to the field of broadcasting in Kerala. This endeavour in the field of broadcasting was followed by the *Surya TV* in 1998. In the year 2000, *Kairali TV* started broadcasting programmes for the people of the state living in the domestic region as well as its diasporic communities living in different parts of the world. These channels in both Malayalam and English offer programmes such as news, entertainment, and didactic religious events. Now there are a number of Malayalam channels competing with many other Indian vernacular channels and international channels like BBC. Some of the popular channels under such categories are: *Manorama News, Indiavision, People TV, Asianet News, Kairali, Surya, Media One, Amritha TV* and *Jaihind TV*.

The umpteen efforts of the visual media in Kerala to inflict a creative positivism to the social psyche can never go exiguous. But on the contrary, as a strong repercussion of being caught up in the firmly influential influx of visual media channels, mostly the regional editions, the contemporary Kerala society has irrecoverably fallen in to the web of consumerism that it has already been, studies point out, a pleasure seeking society. A consumer society is highly pleased to consume and not a bit to produce. In the present day culture, the porn culture, asstated by Eurocentric scholars on pornography, it is not off beam with any society if it turns to be 'pornic.' A consumer society with its affinity for pleasure will certainly turn to porn as it leads us to the most unique and natural medium of pleasure the mystery of which has taken the intellect of many philosophers of the East and the West. So often the tendency to be pornic is found with the consumer societies across the world. So it does with Kerala: "God's Own Country, of late, is in the news for all the wrong reasons. The latest addition is the alarming increase in the rate of pornography" writes Shiba Kurian, a researcher whose newspaper article on the topic remains thought provoking and action seeking. So Kerala emerged as pornocentric in response to globalisation with the growth of mass media, especially the visual media.

Here lie the challenges before the visual media of the state; it has to adopt a strategy to 'please' and, of course, it can never, on this ground, distort the facts of events. So they hone a linguistic spot narration on one hand and the visual narrative on the other. In most cases it seems that the linguistic narrative and visual narrative go in parallel lines and the visuals excite the mass psyche for which it uses female body in many ways: "the homemaker, the sex kitten and the independent woman. The Homemaker is the queen of the domestic sphere.....she symbolized tradition.... The Sex Kitten transfers eroticism to the product. She has been used to catch both women and men's attention" (Secara 2013). In news pertaining to women the visual media shows uncompromising power to show its patriarchal politics in objectifying the 'feminine body' not only the female body. Stephanie Nicholl Berberick in one of her studies in 2010 writes: "the representation of women in the media has always been exploitative. It has, throughout the years, reduced women to being nothing more than objects to be won, prizes to be shown off, and playthings to be abused." Vrinda Venugopal, a budding journalist and researcher writes in one of her articles: "even after 25 years of existence and growth of visual media in Kerala, it remains predominantly male oriented. Unsurprising it may sound in a traditionally patriarchal society." In this strict patriarchal temper, the visual media turns to please the phallocentric audience "absorbing sexist media that presents the audience with unattainable or objectified images of femininity" (Berberick 2010).

Erotic pleasure and 'Solar Panel Scam' in Kerala

In 2013 there came one of the most media celebrated public enjoyed cases called Kerala Solar Panel Scam. A fraudulent solar energy company, Team Solar, in Kerala, India, was solely accused for having collected advance amount of 70 million Rupees from large number of people and investors by offering to make them business partners, or in the guise of installing alternate sources of energy and failed to deliver the goods. For winning the gullibility of the investors easily the company used two women to create political contacts. The main accused Biju Radhakrishnan and Saritha Nair, the directors of the company, were arrested as the scam came to limelight when one of the customers who had paid for the installation filed a case against the company. The incident drew much attention of the public for many a reason. Politically the Leftist parties smelt a strong bait in it to pull down the state government as the office of the chief minister of Kerala was also accused of having involved in the event.

Apart from the political interests the event could raise, the case banged mass psyche of a larger population in response to the visual reports the visual media produced. As many regional TV channels as the leading Indiavision, Surya, Kairali, Asianet, Reporter, Media One, Jaihind, Amritha and Jeevan reported the event with dynamic essays such a way that the narrative both linguistic as well as visual was left to have an emotive impression which mostly gave the patriarchal mass psyche an incessant erotic pleasure. Why the erotic pleasure and how does it affect the masses are the crucial questions to be answered here.

The Solar Panel Scam case has been enormously popular among public audience who have badly had piquant narratives of event the piece de resistance of which is female body. There are two women characters accused of being involved in the case; Saritha S Nair and Shalu Menon. Every news narrative broadcast continuously bore the visuals of the former. The pornic psyche of the Kerala consumer male society has absorbed the female body of the aforementioned as an erotic imageto which flows a massive erotic energy from that mass psyche. This would, of course, have come in to being as an upshot of the entrenchment of sexism in the mass consciousness through the visual as well as the print media. The Kerala media has been prevailing to give detailed news stories about sex exploit cases and scandals in which the father vs. daughter, sister vs. brother, son vs. mother pairs and adolescent and minor girlsare portrayed as being involved. It is indeed a fact that the sexist innovations and imaginations have dangerously been incestuous in the patriarchal male psyche in Kerala. The visual media highlight this beyond bounds. This would be why Paul Zacharia, a renowned Malayalam writer and social activist says; "there is a lot of sex starvation in Kerala."

Sarita Nair's physic was shown to the highly sex starving society that which has already honed an erotic psyche where the body of her becomes an object of the erotic pleasure. What is the symbolic connotation of the visual image of her body is that "*She is simply what man decrees; thus she is called 'the sex', by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him she is sex-absolute sex no less*" (de Boauvoir qtd in Usha 2004). It becomes the central image of a mass orgy. Her body seems more an erotic Galatea statute to the public eyes rather than a instrument capable of leading to an actual condition of the event. It is misleading rather than directing to the truth. The truth never satisfies the public eyes but the pleasure they derive from it does. This pleasure denies their right to the correct news in lieu of the critical analysis required for the better understanding of any information. Of course it gives a glimpse of the event but the on looking psyche revolves round the physical image and never reaches to the centre of the actual event.It presents new oral narratives but the eyes go with visuals. Plato's view on poetry seems equally applicable here. Media gives an "incoherent multiplicity, only particular appearances", and the viewers are "intrinsically unable to see these as a part of larger totality" (Habib, 2008). The erotic appeal of the imago never allows such an audience to apply the critical faculty as "it is itself the monstrous remnant of an erotic object of desire"(Mc Donald2000). As a result these female bodies demonstrated through media awakes "an obsession /sacred taboos/ a mystical view of the sexual body" (*Bright* 2008).

Violation of Human Rights

The mass psyche is denied of the right to correct information as it is engulped by the virtual image of the female body of the accused lady namely Saritha Nair. The news on the event is never presented in such away to conscientize the masses of the threat of financial cheats. The mode of visual news presentation of the event actually makes the viewers misunderstood. The real focus of the society is fallen not on the social purpose of the telecast but more on the political interests which would never serve the ethical purpose of the media. Its news value is politically created and not genuine. Thus the right of the public to the truthful and factual information is in mess. The more the public attend the media for the factual and more truthful and genuine, the more they face a more complex dilatation and diversion.

The most important human rights violation is seen taken place in the visuals itself. The female body is shown as the news goes as a round the clock routine. Most of the time the female bodies are shown over media with no consent of the viewed. Saritha S Nair is known to all Keralites not for virtue but for a crime of which she has been created a femme fatale image by the state visual media. In fact, her "presence on the screen provides little other than voyeuristic pleasure" (V.T. Usha 2004). This tendency of the visual media to use the female body of the women involved in the cases of which the news stories are presented in media can never be left less than a total violation of the right of women. There is a life private as there is a life social. Everyone has a genuine right to private life and it is notnegligible to women on any ground. But in visual media the question can never be expurgated that is there a life private in it? When women are objectified as erotic imago, the socially acceptable persona of them is never given the deserving compassion, sympathy and empathy as fellow social being. They remain subject to the hatred and envy as an erotic forbidden fruit to the mass. This erotic imago is a media construct that perishes the social identity of woman as a daughter, wife and mother the most significant basic elements of the social institution of family. Thus, without being observed, here the visual media survives as a strong violation of the social rights.

Economic and Social Research Centre under National Centre for Research Methods in one of its researches in 2008 on visual ethics quotes Judith M.

Masson, professor of Socio- Legal Studies at University of Bristol, as:

"There is a close relationship between law and ethics but not everything that is legal is ethical. Frequently law ... attempts only to set the minimum acceptable standard. The aspirations of ethical practice are higher ... It can never be appropriate to defend proposed practice solely on the basis that it is legal'

The study further emphasises many crucial points with regard to the visual ethics of which, I suppose, some are highly applicable to this context: a) "researchers should strive to protect the rights, privacy, dignity and well-being of those that they study; b) research should (as far as possible) be based on voluntary informed consent; c) personal information should be treated confidentially and participants anonymised unless they choose to be identified; d) research participants should be informed of the extent to which anonymity and confidentiality can be assured in publication and dissemination and of the potential re-use of data." (ESRC 2008)

Conclusion

Visual media of any nature is ethically expected to keep in tune with these values for the empowerment of a constructive society. Normative body of ethics is always for the enforcement and protection of our societal and moral values. But it is astonishing to see visual media tends to be a saboteur, sometimes, of the body of its own ethics and by breaking with existing normsit shocks and excites the audience. So to continue with dissemination of the constructive human values for the promotion of a nutritious society in moral and cultural senses, the visual media in the state of Kerala should make a retrospective scan of its virtual narratives of cases of sex, rape and other women involved issues. This self scrutiny is highly needed not to have an invasionof privacy of individuals; it should ensure itself against going slanderous and libellous for a better social construction.

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Chapter 20

Human Rights Education and Media

Mr. Ismail Thamarasseri

Human rights education is a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally recognized human rights principles. The opening words of the constitution of India are the resolve of the people of the country to constitute a unique nation. The success and failure of a nation depends on the vigilance and depth of civic sense of the people. This study explores theories of human rights in order to assess how these are reflected in human rights education (HRE). The study is text-based and examined mainly at a higher level such as teacher education, using academic texts as sources. A particular question for the study is how the issue of diversity is addressed both in the human rights theories and in the writing on HRE, in the context of the need to envision HRE for a pluralist society like ours. This paper also analysed how social media has been used in educating human rights.

Key Words: Human Rights, Human Rights Education, Social media

Introduction

"Rights" have corresponding "obligations" or "duties". Rights and Duties are two sides of the same coin. These are popularly accepted connotations. What is right? It is a privilege granted to the person who is entitled for it. There are different kinds of rights, depending upon its characteristics and sources. There are basic rights granted to a person, by birth, which can be called as natural rights. Such rights are emanating from the natural law, such as right to air, right to way etc. Human rights are the different types of rights entitled to a person, to ensure the protection of his life, freedom and liberty, equality and dignity.

Human rights are "rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled." Proponents of the concept usually assert that everyone is endowed with certain entitlements merely by reason of being human. Human rights education is the teaching of the history, theory, and law of human rights in schools and educational institutions, as well as outreach to the general public. Human rights are thus conceived in a universalistic and egalitarian fashion. Such entitlements can exist as shared norms of actual human moralities, as justified moral norms or natural rights supported by strong reasons, or as legal rights either at a national level or within international law. However, there is no consensus as to precise nature of what in particular should or should not be regarded as a human right in any of the preceding senses, and the abstract concept of human rights has been a subject of intense philosophical debate and criticism. [Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)]

The Modern Conception of Human Rights

The modern conception of human rights developed as the result of the Second World War, in part as a response to the Holocaust, culminating in its adoption by the UDHR by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1948. However, while the phrase "human rights" is relatively modern the intellectual foundations of the modern concept, can be traced through the history of philosophy and the concepts of natural law rights and liberties as far back as the city states of Classical Greece and the development of Roman law. The true forerunner of human rights discourse was the enlightenment concept of natural rights developed by figures such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant and through the political realm in the United States Bill of Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Concept of Human Rights

The philosopher John Finnis (1989) argues that human rights are justifiable on the grounds of their instrumental value in creating the necessary conditions for human well-being. Interest theories highlight the duty to respect the rights of other individuals on grounds of self-interest; Human rights law, applied to a State's own citizens serves the interest of states, by, for example, minimizing the risk of violent resistance and protest and by keeping the level of dissatisfaction with the government manageable. The biological theory considers the comparative reproductive advantage of human social behaviour based on empathy and altruism in the context of natural selection.

Human Security

Human security is an emerging school of thought which challenges the traditional, state-based conception of security and argues that a people-focused approach to security is more appropriate in the modern interdependent world and would be more effective in advancing the security of individuals and societies across the globe.

Several theoretical approaches have been advanced to explain how and why human rights become part of social expectations. One of the oldest Western philosophies on human rights is that they are a product of a natural law, stemming from different philosophical or religious grounds. Other theories hold that human rights codify moral behaviour which is a human social product developed by a process of biological and social evolution. Human rights are also described as a sociological pattern of rule setting (as in the sociological theory of law and the work of Max Weber). These approaches include the notion that individuals in a society accept rules from legitimate authority in exchange for security and economic advantage a social contract.

Soviet Concept of Human Rights

Soviet concept of human rights was different from conceptions prevalent in the West. According to Western legal theory, "it is the individual who is the beneficiary of human rights which are to be asserted against the government", whereas Soviet law declared that state is the source of human rights". Therefore, Soviet legal system regarded law as an arm of politics and courts as agencies of the government. Extensive extra-judiciary powers were given to the Soviet secret police agencies. The regime abolished Western rule of law, civil liberties, protection of law and guarantees of property. According to Vladimir Lenin, the purpose of socialist courts was "not to eliminate terror... but to substantiate it and legitimize in principle" (Pipes, 1995)

Indivisibility

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) included both economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights because it was based on the principle that the different rights could only successfully exist in combination: "The ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his social, economic and cultural rights" (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 1966)

This is held to be true because without civil and political rights the public cannot assert their economic, social and cultural rights. Similarly, without livelihoods and a working society, the public cannot assert or make use of civil or political rights; it is also known as the full belly thesis. The indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights has been confirmed by the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA): "All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and related. International community treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner on the same footing and with the same emphasis."(VDPA, World Conference on Human Rights, 1993)

Categorization of Human Rights

Opponents of the indivisibility of human rights argue that economic, social and cultural rights are fundamentally different from civil and political rights and require completely different approaches. Economic, social and cultural rights are argued to be: positive, meaning that they require active provision of entitlements by the state resource-intensive, meaning that they are expensive and difficult to provide progressive, meaning that they will take significant time to implement vague, meaning they cannot be quantitatively measured, and whether they are adequately provided or not is difficult to judge ideologically divisive/political, meaning that there is no consensus on what should and shouldn't be provided as a right socialist, as opposed to capitalist non-justifiable, meaning that their provision, or the breach of them, cannot be judged in a court of law aspirations or goals, as opposed to real 'legal' rights.

In The No-Nonsense Guide to Human Rights, Olivia Ball and Paul Gready (2006) argue that for both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights it is easy to find examples which do not fit into the above categorization. Amongst several others, they highlight the fact that maintaining a judicial system, a fundamental requirement of the civil right to due process before the law and other rights relating to judicial process, is positive, resource-intensive, progressive and vague, while the social right to housing is precise, justifiable and can be a real 'legal' right.

Another categorization, offered by Karel Vasak (1999), is that there are three generations of human rights: first-generation civil and political rights (right to life and political participation), second-generation economic, social and cultural rights (right to subsistence) and third-generation solidarity rights (right to peace, right to clean environment). Out of these generations, the third generation is the most debated and lacks both legal and political recognition. This categorization is at odds with the indivisibility of rights, as it implicitly states that some rights can exist without others. Prioritization of rights for pragmatic reasons is however a widely accepted necessity. Human rights expert Philip Alston argues: "If every possible human rights element is deemed to be essential or necessary, then nothing will be treated as though it is truly important; the call for prioritizing is not to suggest that any obvious violations of rights can be ignored".

Universalism vs. Cultural relativism of Human rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) enshrines universal rights that apply to all humans equally, whichever geographical location, state, race or culture they belong to. Proponents of cultural relativism argue for acceptance of different cultures, which may have practices conflicting with human rights. For example female genital mutilation occurs in different cultures in Africa, Asia and South America. It is not mandated by any religion, but has become a tradition in many cultures. It is considered a violation of women's and girl's rights by much of the international community, and is outlawed in some countries.

Universalism has been described by some as cultural, economic or political imperialism. In particular, the concept of human rights is often claimed to be fundamentally rooted in a politically liberal outlook which, although generally accepted in Europe, Japan or North America, is not necessarily taken as standard elsewhere.

Cultural relativism is a self-detonating position; if cultural relativism is true, then universalism must also be true. Relativistic arguments also tend to neglect the fact that modern human rights are new to all cultures, dating back no further than the UDHR in 1948. They also don't account for the fact that the UDHR was drafted by people from many different cultures and traditions.

Michael Ignatieff (2002) has argued that cultural relativism is almost exclusively an argument used by those who wield power in cultures which commit human rights abuses, and that those whose human rights are compromised are the powerless. This reflects the fact that the difficulty in judging universalism versus relativism lies in who is claiming to represent a particular culture.

Although the argument between universalism and relativism is far from complete, it is an academic discussion in that all international human rights instruments adhere to the principle that human rights are universally applicable. The 2005 World Summit reaffirmed the international community's adherence to this principle; i.e., The universal nature of human rights and freedoms is beyond question.

Currently debated rights

Events and new possibilities can affect existing rights or require new ones. Advances of technology, medicine, and philosophy constantly challenge the status quo of human rights thinking.

Environmental Rights

The onset of various environmental issues, especially climate change, has created potential conflicts between different human rights. Human rights ultimately require a working ecosystem and healthy environment, but the granting of certain rights to individuals may damage these. Such as the conflict between right to decide number of offspring and the common need for a healthy environment, as noted in the tragedy of the commons. In the area of environmental rights, the responsibilities of multinational corporations, so far relatively unaddressed by human rights legislation, is of paramount consideration. (Hardin, 1968) Environmental Rights revolve largely around the idea of a right to a liveable environment both for the present and the future generations.

Future Generations and Human rights

In 1997 UNESCO adopted the Declaration on the Responsibilities of the Present Generation towards the Future Generation. The Declaration opens with the words: "Mindful of the will of the peoples, set out solemnly in the Charter of the United Nations, to 'save succeeding generations from the curse of war' and to safeguard the values and principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all other relevant instruments of international law."

Right to Water

There is no current universal human right to water, binding or not, enshrined by the United Nations or any other multilateral body. In November 2002, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued a non-binding comment affirming that access to water was a human right: "the human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights."

Right to life

The UDHR states that everyone has the "right to life". According to many

Human Rights activists, the death penalty violates these rights. The UN also called on retentive states to establish a moratorium on Capital Punishment with a view to abolition. (Amnesty International, 2008) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights also prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment. Countries have argued that "enhanced interrogation methods", which amount to torture, are needed for national security.

Foetal Rights

Foetal rights are the legal or ethical rights of human foetuses. The term is used most often in the context of the abortion debate, as the basis for an argument in support of the pro-life stance.

Reproductive Rights

Reproductive rights are rights relating to reproduction and reproductive health. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines reproductive rights as follows: "Reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include the right of all to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence." (World Health Organization) Reproductive rights were first established as a subset of human rights at the United Nation's 1968 International Conference on Human Rights.

Human rights education

Amnesty International believes that human rights education is fundamental for addressing the underlying causes of human rights violations, preventing human rights abuses, combating discrimination, promoting equality, and enhancing people's participation in democratic decision-making processes.'Human rights education is a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally recognized human rights principles.' 'As a medium to long-term process, human rights education seeks to develop and integrate people's cognitive, affective and attitudinal dimensions, including critical thinking, in relation to human rights. Its goal is to build a culture of respect for and action in the defence and promotion of human rights for all.' (Amnesty International, 2004)

Human rights education is an internationally recognized method for promoting human rights on a local, national and global level among many levels of stakeholders. Human rights education can also play a vital role in building social structures that support participatory democracies and the resolution of conflict, and can provide a common understanding of how to address political and social differences equitably and celebrate cultural diversity.

The human rights education spreads human rights culture. Values are the bases for developing human rights culture. The goal of the evolving human rights culture requires operating at various levels such as the following:

- Spreading awareness amongst masses, of and about these rights and also their duty for respecting the rights of others.
- Not only creating awareness amongst masses particularly amongst weaker,poor and vulnerable groups but also in imparting capacities and confidence in them to stand for protection and preservation of their rights.
- Requiring many to shed away some of the attitude which are derogatory to others' dignity.

There is a growing consensus that education in and for human rights is essential and can contribute to both the reduction of human rights violations and the building of free, just and peaceful societies. Human rights education is also increasingly recognised as an effective strategy to prevent human rights abuses. Human Rights are promoted through three dimensions of education. They are; Knowledge, Values beliefs and attitudes and Action.

Human Rights Education is a process that basically deals with a cognitive and moral transformation, a shaping of students' consciousness and conscience which in turn, leads to have a change in students' feelings, thinking and understanding, behaviour patterns, attitudes and activities, etc. Amnesty International (1994) defines human rights education or training as programme which aims to provide knowledge and understanding about human rights, and seeks to introduce human rights values in the teaching or training practices and curricula of both formal and non-formal educational programs.

Education about and for human rights includes the development of skills such as critical thinking, communication skills, problem-solving and negotiation, all of which are essential for effective human rights activism and participation in decision-making processes.

The principal aims of education for human rights are:

- to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedom;
- to develop fully the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
- to develop attitudes and behaviour to promote respect for the rights of others;

- to ensure genuine gender equality and equal opportunities for women in all spheres;
- to promote understanding and tolerance among diverse national, ethnic, religious, linguistic
- and other groups;
- to empower people to participate actively in the life of a free society;
- to promote democracy, development, social justice, communal harmony, solidarity and
- friendship among nations;
- to further the activities of the UN system, in particular UNESCO, the Office of the UN High

Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, aimed at the creation of a culture of peacebased upon universal values of human rights, international understanding, tolerance and non-violence.

Contents of Education for Human Rights

Education for human rights, should be aimed at full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and for that purpose have regards to the following:

- All human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated and interdependent, and all are essential for the full development of human personality;
- While regional and national particularities are to be borne in mind, it is the duty of States,
- regardless of their political, civil, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect allhuman rights and fundamental freedoms;
- Universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms contribute
- to stability, security and well-being, necessary for socio-economic development;
- Human rights, democracy, peace and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing;
- Rights of women and girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights;
- Human rights education should be aimed at the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life. Awareness towards prevention of gender based violence, sexual

harassment and exploitation should be a component of education programmes;

- Promotion and protection of the rights of the child is a priority and requires dissemination of knowledge of relevant standards. Special efforts are needed to eradicate child labour, child prostitution, and child pornography;
- Special attention should be paid to the rights of persons belonging to various vulnerable groups - national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, indigenous people, refugees and internally displaced persons, migrant workers, persons with HIV/AIDS and other health problems, disabled, and elderly;
- Special attention should be also given to the mobilization of the public opinion against major threats and challenges to human rights: terrorism, organized crime, corruption,trafficking of human beings for exploitative purposes, drug trafficking, violence etc.
- Education for human rights should be multidisciplinary and should include the following:
- knowledge of internationally recognized human rights standards enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenants, international conventions,declarations and protocols, and international procedures and mechanisms for human rights protection as well as norms of international humanitarian law;
- knowledge of national laws and procedures related to human rights;
- skills necessary for the application of these standards and procedures in everyday life;
- behavioural patterns based upon vigilance against violations of human rights wherever theyoccur;
- knowledge of social realities and impact of glob globalization process.

Education in and for human right should also be aimed at the elimination of prejudices andnegative stereotypes which in many cases become the source of discrimination, hatred and violence. These concerns should be reflected in manuals, textbooks and other educational materials. Programmes for education for human rights should be developed in accordance with thePlan of Action for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the UNESCO World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, 1993) and the Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy. The conference stresses that education for human rights is, by itself, a human right. It further underlines that it is the duty of the State to take all necessary measures to ensure the realization of this right.

Educational Methods Teaching Aids and Training Programmes

Appropriate methodology and materials for the teaching of human rights should bedeveloped in full conformity with the human rights principles and standards. Special attention should be given to the elaboration of educational materials suitable for formal and informal settings, nd adapted to the needs and demands of various target groups. Suchmaterials should be made available in various national and local languages, in different forms and insufficient number. Bearing in mind, the special characteristics of the region and prevailing high level of illiteracy, innovative audio-visual programmes should be prepared. An effort should also be made to reach the population especially in the remote and rural areas. Environmental education is an essential part of education for human rights

Human rights -Indian Scenario

In India, the parliament enacted the protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 by providing a National Human Rights Commission and State Human Rights Commissions in different states to enquire about the violation of human rights, either on suo-moto or on a petition filed by a victim or any other person, on behalf of a victim. The act defines human rights in the following terms. "Human rights" means the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the constitution or embodied in the international covenants and enforceable by courts in India."We, the people of India"- These are the opening words of the constitution of India. It is the resolve of the people of the country to constitute a unique nation namely India or Bharat. The success and failure of a nation depends on the vigilance and depth of civic sense of the people and efficiency of the Government institutions could improve only when there is a proper understanding of the laws and regulations, as well as the duties and obligations.

Social Media and Human Rights Protection

As the use of social media becomes increasingly mainstream, it is changing the character of rights advocacy and communication around the world, with rights defenders and organizations continuing to refine their online presence and expand their ability to reach a global audience. The Human Rights Commission of Australia has embraced social media: They are active on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, You Tube, and blogs. Citizens can register complaints online to the Human Rights Commission of New Zealand.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Britain is also onboard with social media. The South African Human Rights Commission established an e-learning portal, partnering with educational institutions to promote human rights education. Most mainstream human rights advocates and campaigners use social media as an integral part of their outreach. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and Witness are among the internationally recognized advocacy and research organizations now using Twitter to share information and calls to action. Amnesty International has said that social media is key as it explores the future of human rights activism.

Modern forms of communication and new media have made the world smaller. The Arab spring is perhaps the best example of using social media to spread messages of human rights and dignity. The Ombudsman Office in Montenegro initiated blogging for children but could not cope with the high volume of queries from kids wanting to blog. The Ombudsman from Kosovo said that social media is needed to reach out to different age groups. The Ombudsman office from Albania said there is a need for additional resources and technical staff to deal with increased interaction with the community as a result of social media. There are concerns too: dealing with unfair criticism, innuendo, additional costs and staffing time, a lack of capacity and preparedness, and questions about the usefulness of such platforms. The Office of the Ombudsman for Disability in Croatia, however, said that social media is particularly important for people with disabilities: It's an opportunity for them to be part of ongoing policy discourse, knowledge sharing and, most importantly, for accessing social services. However, web accessibility for people with disabilities needs to be addressed.

The web presence of all ombudsman institutions and national human rights institutions should factor in the specific needs of people with disabilities, minorities (including such issues as minority languages), and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups when using social media. Whether or not the expanded reach of social media results in more effective advocacy, outreach, and thematic campaigns for policy change depends on how well rights institutions, advocates, and campaigners translate access into action. The issue of public legitimacy is particularly pertinent as young people across the world are increasingly using social media to express themselves and share information. (Kabir, 2011).

Social media and Political Activism

The use of social media is transforming political activism. In the uprisings spreading across the Middle East and North Africa, the use of social media is spawning more diffuse and dynamic political movements. The possibilities are enormously exciting, but authoritarian governments are already catching on. In this moment it is worth thinking about the dangers ahead. In the traditional model, revolution is guided by a handful of charismatic leaders aided by a small group of disciples. That model is highly vulnerable. A repressive government can often stop political change by arresting the leaders and harassing supporters, as some governments did to limit the "colour revolutions" of the last decade.

Social media makes possible a seemingly leaderless revolution, which cannot be so easily decapitated. In Egypt and Tunisia, for example, the revolutions did have people in leadership roles, studying other revolutionary movements and preparing strategies. But they could lead quietly, behind the scenes. Their lack of visibility allowed them time and room to plan without attracting government attention. Meanwhile, the movement built virally, with friends passing messages to friends, eclipsing any particular leader.

Facebook allowed political supporters to stand up and be counted virtually, without initially having to stand up physically and risk violent reprisal. Facebook could be monitored - Libya and Syria arrested some users - but as the number of virtual supporters grew, people became emboldened to use Facebook more freely, apparently figuring that the government couldn't monitor everyone. That drew in new constituents, many of whom showed up when demonstrations took place.

Social media allowed protesters to respond quickly when security forces attacked, warning others on Twitter with hand-held devices. They posted videos and photos of abuse on YouTube and Flickr. Al-Jazeera, in turn, beamed those images across the region - with enormous effect - even when its reporters were barred from a country. These communications generated outrage - and support for the demonstrators.

Some people rushed to the scene. Others applied pressure from abroad. Text messages and email also allow communication, but social media make mass interaction easy, quickly engaging many who have no acquaintance with each other. But social media, like other technology, is double-edged, usable for repression or freedom. Unlike private conversations, social media leaves a virtual paper trail for governments to monitor and exploit. Facebook is especially dangerous because it doesn't allow pseudonyms even in repressive countries. (Roth, 2011)

Conclusion

The individual is absolute, that his or her reality must be recognized unconditionally and necessarily lies at the basis of human rights. However, some clarification is needed. What is required for each individual consists in the possibilities he or she has or must unfold and develop. Violence consists in individuals not being able to actualize their possibilities or to open ulterior possible horizons. Human rights are addressed not only or exclusively against open, generalized and declared forms of violence. More properly, they are addressed in principle against any form of everyday and hence systematic violence. Therefore, it is not necessary that there be situations of torture, of the "disappeared" or of violations of International Human Law, for there to be generalized violation of human rights. Indeed that false idea led to the erroneous belief, spread broadly among social circles in the countries of the First World, those human rights typically is a problem of under development belonging exclusively to the so-called Third World. The issue of human rights is raised as a flag of caution addressed to "others" in order to mark their difference, such as for instance in dialogues between Western countries and some countries of the Middle-East or Asia.

The big difficulty implied by the commitment to respect human rights consists in the capacity to feel for the other, for situations of human rights call not just for understanding, but for sensibility. This is so, even though the road to the foundations of human rights goes from understanding, not the other way round. The opposite road from greater sensibility to greater understanding is neither necessary nor wholly guaranteed because when left on its own sensibility can readily be manipulated.

There is a necessary implication in both the theoretical and the practical orders between human rights and solidarity. The combination of comprehension and make sensitivecan generate an ethos. What is truly relevant regarding the principle of subsidiary is that, relative to human rights and solidarity, it provides the necessary tools for the "realization" of ethics. By this should be understood not that subsidiary is the only mode of realizing ethics, but that in the ongoing state of affairs it is the most expeditious one.

There is therefore an authentic philosophical problem regarding the comprehension and articulation of the relation between human rights and education. It regards the possibility of speaking meaningfully of a social, cultural or generic consciousness at the corresponding levels, for example at the national, international, and finally worldwide or global level. Whatever be the possibility of an answer by philosophy, it is necessary to point out the consequences and the real implications of these problems.They are not simply theoretical, or matters of preference or of pre-established interests. The repeated use by us of "the generation and/or enlarging of spaces" points to the authentic significance and implications of the whole problem. The point is to make life ever more possible at exemplary levels with criteria and standards of quality, that is, with universally desirable value. To understand this means to grasp that in which society, state and culture consist, both in rational and in reasonable terms.

Finally, human rights, in its specificities and reciprocal relations deal with the spaces and guarantees that enable our decisions to make sense and therefore to construct our life and our world. Multiple seams and lines of analyses could still be raised, or remain in need of further development. The analyses here require additional investigation of which these papers are but the beginning.

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Chapter 21

Role of Media in Communicating Human Rights

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Abstract

This chapter analyses different roles of media in protecting and communicating human rights. Human rights are underpinned by core values or principles, including fairness, respect, equality, dignity, autonomy, universality and participation. This article focussed on human rights issues, values and principles which are expressed through internationally agreed laws. Various human rights treaties and laws exist as a vehicle for making core human rights values real in people's lives. Optimizing Human Rights reporting and various obligations were also discussed in this chapter.

Keywords: Journalism, Mass Media, Communication, Human Rights, Reporting

Introduction

During the 1990s, human rights issues became more prominent, both in public policy and public opinion. Many governments officially incorporated human rights principles in their policy frameworks, with legal implications. Many international institutions (notably the United Nations agencies) have mainstreamed human rights issue. The media reflected this upsurge of interest in its coverage of human rights stories. Today the mass media make reference to human rights in their coverage more often and more systematically. Human rights have become increasingly prominent in recent years. Governments and political leaders refer to international human rights standards more frequently.

both in formal definitions of policy and in public speeches. Public awareness has similarly evolved. Human rights are understood to be near the heart of many international news issues from Afghanistan to Palestine and Colombia to Sierra Leone — and increasingly linked to discussions of international debt and trade, education and health. Coverage of human rights in the media is therefore likely to continue to grow — and it is appropriate increasingly to expect journalists and broadcasters to report them accurately. Therefore, in this article we would like to explain at length the role of media in communicating Human Rights.

Human rights belong to everyone's basic rights and we all are entitled to these rights simply because we are human, regardless of who we are, where we live or what we do. Human rights allow us to flourish, reach our potential and participate fully in society. Human rights cover many aspects of everyday life ranging from the rights to food, shelter, education and health to freedoms of thought, religion and expression, (Nickel, J. 2007)

The ideas behind human rights have been present throughout history in many different societies and civilizations. However, the modern concept of human rights emerged in the twentieth century as a response to the events of the Second World War, particularly the mass crimes committed during the Holocaust. States came together in 1948 at the United Nations to agree the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (UDHR) – the most famous, most translated, and probably most important, human rights document.

The fundamental rights and freedom outlined in the UDHR are expressed in international human rights treaties that are legally binding on states that agree to them, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. According to Orend, (2002) There are nine core UN human rights treaties

The nine core UN human rights treaties are:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- The Convention Against Torture (CAT)
- The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- (CEDAW)
- The Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

- The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
- The International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

There are many human rights, which reflect on different areas of our lives – spanning civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects. All human rights are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent – restricting one right has a negative impact on other rights, while taking steps to fulfil a right facilitates the enjoyment of other rights. For example, restricting the right to health by not providing an adequate healthcare system may impact on other rights in a negative way such as the right to life. Enhancing the right to education through an effective education system for all can support the enjoyment of other rights such as the right to work.

Different human rights laws focus on different rights – for example there is an international treaty that covers civil and political rights (such as freedom of expression, and the right to liberty), and a separate international treaty encompassing economic, social and cultural rights (such as rights to education and health). Some international treaties focus on particular rights, such as the Convention against Torture. Other international treaties protect the rights of specific groups, for example women, children and disabled people. The existence of these treaties does not give these groups any additional rights, but recognises the particular discrimination and difficulties some groups face in claiming their human rights, (Smith, 2007).

No one can have their human rights completely 'taken away' – even if they have not met their responsibilities or have compromised the rights of others. Some human rights are absolute, which means they can never be limited or restricted, in any circumstances – for example the right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way. However, the majority of human rights are not absolute and can be limited or restricted in certain circumstances. For example, if someone writes hate speech inciting murder against an ethnic group, their freedom of expression may be limited to ensure the safety of others. Social services may decide to remove a child from their home and place them in care if they have evidence that they are being abused by their parents, thus restricting the right to respect for family life. The conditions under which human rights can be restricted or limited are set out in the relevant human rights laws.

The fact that we all have human rights does not mean that they are always respected. It is evident that human rights abuses and violations continue to occur in different parts of the world. In order to make human rights a reality in all people's lives, it is essential that people know what their rights are and know how to claim them. It is equally vital that those responsible for protecting and respecting people's rights are aware of their obligations and are held to account for human rights abuses. Therefore, states and people within them must know what their rights are, what responsibilities they hold, and how these can be maintained, protected and fulfilled, (Nickel, 2007).

The primary responsibility for upholding human rights lies with states. The human rights responsibilities of states are often broken down into obligations to respect, protect and fulfil rights.

- *The obligation to* respect means that states must refrain from carrying out human rights abuses (for example not taking away someone's life arbitrarily, thus respecting the right to life)
- *The obligation to* protect means that states must protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses by other actors (for example, protecting the right to life by making sure that life-sustaining medical treatment is not withdrawn unfairly)
- *The obligation to* fulfil means that states must take positive steps to make human rights a reality in people's lives (for example improving the healthcare system, to ensure that lives are saved wherever possible – thus taking steps towards fulfilling the right to life)

Human rights provide minimum standards below which states cannot go, and also set goals for the constant improvement of these minimum standards. Human rights recognise that we all live alongside each other, and everyone else has rights too. This is why the majority of rights are non-absolute and can be limited or restricted in certain circumstances. If we compromise others' human rights, we are subject to laws that may limit our own rights as a result. For example, if we commit a crime we may be sent to jail, thus restricting our right to liberty. But more than this, human rights can be viewed as part of the relationships we have to each other and society as a whole, and therefore we have an ethical responsibility to respect each other's rights – even when in some instances those rights conflict with one's own. The state is ultimately accountable for balancing these sometimes conflicting rights, (Smith, 2007).

Human Rights and Media

In view of the fact that there is a revolutionary change and growth in every sphere of life and mainly in the communication and media world, media today, plays a decisive role in the development of society. Thus the role of media in protection of human rights cannot be ignored or minimized. Media is a communicator of the public. Today its role extends not only to giving facts as news, it also analyses and comments on the facts and thus shapes the views of the people. The impact of media on society today is beyond doubt and debate. The media has been setting for the nation its social, political economic and even cultural agenda. With the advent of satellite channels its impact is even sharper and deeper. With twenty-four hours news-channels, people cannot remain neutral to and unaffected by what the channels are serving day and night. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that the media plays an important and ethical role at all levels and in all parts of the country and the world.

Media can play a major role in protecting and promoting human rights in the world. It can make people aware of the need to promote certain values in the cause of human rights which are of eternal value to the mankind. Peace, non-violence, disarmament, maintenance and promotion of ecological balances and unpolluted environment and ensuring human rights to all irrespective of caste, colour and creed should be the minimum common agenda for the media. The media can perform this role in different ways. It can make people aware of their rights, expose its violations and focus attention on people and areas in need of the protection of human rights and pursue their case till they achieve them.

Media can also give publicity to the individuals and organisations, which are engaged in securing human rights. This will encourage as well as motivate others to do the similar work. Media can inform and educate the people of their rights and suggest ways and means by which they can solve their problems and thus empowering them to protect their rights. Since media plays the role of communication between the state and the public, it can also play an effective role of making the authorities aware of their duties, (Ray, 2007).

Media's new role today is reporting, analysing and commenting. It faces a challenge in playing the role in protecting human rights in the world. While playing this new role, there is risk of its misuse. For that self-regulation is the need of the hour. Journalists should set 'Lakshman Rekha' while reporting human rights violations. The main aim before the journalists should be to give facts but not in a manner and with the purpose to create sensation and to arouse the sentiments of the people. Projection and language should be decent and civilised. Journalists should not add insult to inquiry. Media should refrain from giving statements and pictures that are flaring. Since media is the mirror of the society, care should be taken that the mirror is not hazy.

While reporting such violation media should not get influenced by authorities. It should look deep into the problem and provide solutions. Mere reporting of the facts is not enough. It should give reasons of the problem and the nature of the violations and then give solutions. Press has a sacred duty to focus human rights violations and then measures for protecting them. Freedom of expression is a sacred right well accepted over the globe and journalists should respect this freedom. In Indian constitution, it finds place as a guaranteed fundamental right.

The Government of India in tune with constitutional mandate professes its anxiety to protect and safeguard this fundamental right. But no right and for that matter the right to freedom of expression is absolute and unfettered in all circumstances but bound by duty to maintain peace and harmony of the body polity by exercising prudence and restraint in the exercise of right to freedom of speech. If exercise of this right is likely to inflame passion, the right to freedom of expression needs circumspection and consequent restraint for greater good of the society, (Wells and Hakanen, 1997).

The apex court of the country in a watershed judgment in the case of Olga Tellis declared that a man has not only a right to live but to live with human dignity. Consequently all attributes for living with the dignity of a human soul namely education, shelter etc. are to be guaranteed and welfare activities of the State must be directed to ensure socio-economic condition where no one in the country is deprived of the basic requirements to lead a dignified life. The media being the watchdog of the nation must work for guiding the people and the government to move towards such goal relentlessly and in right direction.

Different Roles of Media in Protecting Human Rights

There is not just one role of the media. Media can take on many roles, which makes the discussion on how to link media with human rights very complex, depending on the question, (Wolfermann, 2010).

Media in the role of the victim: Is the questions, how we can protect journalists? The recent (2009) murder of the Russian journalist Natalja Estemirowa is just one out of many sad examples of how dangerous it can be to expose human rights violation or report on sensitive political issues.

Media in the role of the perpetrator: Or is the question on how to stop media from violating human rights? In many cases the media has an important role in heating up conflicts, using propaganda towards minorities. Also the use of language in terms of reproducing stereo types or the media violating the rights to privacy are important issues to consider, (Masmoudi, 2008).

Media in the role of the agenda setter / gate keeper: An important question can also be on how media set the agenda and act as a gate keeper? The media has a lot of power to turn an issue into a public debate or to ignore it. That concerns national and international topics. Let's take an example of a hunger crisis in South Sudan in the early 90ies during the Golf war. There was a big lack of media reporting resulting in no active aid involvement from the international community. One of the many examples in which crisis was forgotten by the international press because of other ongoing events that were given priority. There can be a particular interest of the owner of a media, economical motives and also personal preferences and specialization of a journalist that influence what ends up on the agenda, Wells, and Hakanen, 1997)

Media in the role of the entrepreneur: Another possible question is how media act as entrepreneurs? "Sex and crime" sell, as we know. It's not only the responsibility of the media but of course the one of the readers who influences the quality of a medium, supporting its existence as consumers. In times of economic crisis the competition factor is high, cutting back jobs of journalist influence the quality and media don't want to take risk in their agenda setting.

Media in the role of the "amplifier": Who has access to media? Is there a variety of media? If we think about that, we come across the problems of illiteracy, education, available technology (internet). A democracy needs a broad media landscape in order to enable public debates on relevant topics. In that sense the media is an important factor for a healthy immune system of every democracy. The media can "amplify" people's voice, it can make their positions, questions, needs or demands heard.

Media in the role of the educator: Should media take part in educating people / children? If so, who sets the content, the standards? Media can be active in reporting on human rights issues, for example on the situation of minorities in a country in order to decrease stereotypes and increase understanding. A TV program can educate children on their rights, a TV soap can transport values through theirs characters. The choice of movies shown in TV and in cinemas can influence people's perspective, (Ramos, Ron, & Thomas, 2007).

The agenda in a newsroom is determined essentially first by its reporting and editorial decision- making processes, and then by the organisation's editorial culture — which in turn is influenced by various external and internal factors. The editorial process being itself a form of filtering, the question becomes which filters operate, (Wells and Hakanen, 1997).

Optimizing Human Rights Reporting

Reporting is essentially reactive. Journalists' fundamental dilemma is that they must gather and produce news on a daily (sometimes hourly) basis, and at the same time must think about it. The breaking news culture undermines editorial and ethical reflection, which is crucial to human rights reporting.

The selection of news is event-driven. The duty of journalists is not to redress wrongs but report news: professionally, they feel no duty to pursue an issue in which public interest is waning. More generally, the news-driven information culture focuses on political and military events rather than social and economic processes, and as a result ignores or under-reports many human rights issues, (Waisbord, 2001).

The media determines what is newsworthy where press freedom exists. It is a fundamental principle of a free society, and the essence of press freedom, that news organisations determine their agenda. It follows, inconveniently, that their news agendas often differ from the priorities of human rights activists.

The editorial environment is information-loaded. Human rights news competes for the attention of journalists and editors with vast amounts of other information. In most cases, the human rights angle is only one of several possible angles on a complex story. Journalists do not have a duty to privilege human rights information, (Lusgarten, and Debrix, 2005)

Angling constrains coverage. Why one angle should be favoured rather than another is a matter of the news editor's judgement in relation to three questions: what is the most important feature of the story? What else has been reported recently on the same subject? What is of interest to the organisation's audience? The response to these questions determines usually the choice of angle and it is one reason why human rights angles are rarely the lead. If a story is important enough to get into the news, it is usually (not always) for other reasons.

The relationship between reporter and editor is crucial. Reporters and editors are both involved in deciding what stories are identified and selected, and how they are covered. For various reasons, the relationship between reporters and editors has been changing. International news organisations now employ more stringers, and fewer foreign correspondents, while editors have more editorial power but also less time to monitor events. On the whole, journalists and editors were concerned about some of these trends: at the same time, they said that experienced reporters still influence the selection of stories and the quality of reporting, (ICHRP, 2002).

Changes in technology and the modern editorial culture are two factors that influence coverage of human rights. Other factors also tend to cause the media to misrepresent or marginalise human rights issues that (by professional criteria) ought to be reported more fully or accurately, (Wallinger, 2010).

Human rights organisations have become increasingly active players in relation to the media. They have always been a key source of information. In recent years, the big agencies have responded to the new media environment by developing their media operations. Most have press offices, staffed by professionals. They compete with governments and other institutions for the media's attention, and also distribute information directly themselves. Several issues emerged concerning relations between human rights NGOs and the media. (ICHRP Report, 2002)

Human rights and media organisations have limited interests in common. Unlike human rights organisations, news organisations do not consider human rights stories to be intrinsically more important. The dilemma and challenge for NGOs is how to keep media interest high without trivialising or sensationalising the issues they want to see aired, (Schimmel, 2009).

Non-governmental organisations do influence media coverage. Many NGOs are influential sources of information for the media, for governments and other institutions. They can play a key role in attracting media attention to new problems, less visible violations and slow crises. Their work has often led to more accurate, more complete and more consistent coverage. NGOs with research and media capacity must decide whether to stay out of the information market, at the risk of playing a marginal role in the news process, or try to influence it, knowing that this will require compromise.

To be effective, NGOs need to know how news is produced, selected and structured. The media demand simplicity, directness, narrative, simple structure and personalisation. Standard human rights reports are not tailored to meet these needs. As a result, professional journalists often feel the information that NGOs provide is inappropriate, mistimed or simply unreliable. This raises issues of training and capacity building in the effective use of media.

Media-focused campaigning has consequences. Professional NGO press offices are effective, but competitive. Attempts to collaborate are frequent but only partially successful. Information from NGOs is subject to the same forces that select out other information. The drive to be heard encourages NGOs to identify with trends in the mainstream media, creating the risk that their specific values and agendas may be overwhelmed by them. This situation is an invitation to certain kinds of distortion, and these need not be dishonest.

Conclusion

Most news professionals and human rights activists agree that the media are more receptive to human rights issues today — though the consensus does not extend to saying that the media cover the subject well. It emerged that human rights issues are reported more than they are covered. Rights issues get into the coverage but do not lead the story. Whether they do so, and how they do so, depend on how deeply editors want to go into the stories concerned.

From the perspective of human rights advocates, there is a positive dimension to this: limited coverage in many stories can be better than narrow specialised coverage or none.

Journalists tend to agree that human rights should be included in any story where they are relevant, and that human rights should inform news analysis. The weakness is that rights issues, although included, are not usually articulated as such. The absence of explanatory analysis undermines the quality of coverage. When failure to inform prevents those who receive the information from understanding what it means, it represents a professional (not ethical) dereliction, (IFJ, 1999).

Some trends in human rights reporting infringe the tenets of responsible journalism. The evolution of international human rights law, its more explicit use as a point of reference by governments, and the growing complexity of many of the reporting issues that arise, suggest that the media should review how they cover issues that have a human rights dimension and should take more seriously their responsibility to report them accurately. This may require new forms of training for journalists to deal with.

Ignorance of what human rights are - many journalists simply do not know enough about human rights and human rights law, and about the laws of war and humanitarian law. The media have a professional duty to understand what these rights are, in order to be able to describe events and explain them to their audiences. Confusion about where human rights are. International media tend to presume that human rights violations occur 'abroad'. This assumption is false and distorts news coverage. Many violations occur, and are documented, in Europe and the United States for instance, whose governments have the same obligation to respect rights. Coverage of human rights should be properly international, and criteria for coverage similar from one country to another.

Human rights violations are associated often chiefly with conflicts and authoritarian regimes. As a result, a narrow spectrum of civil and political rights tends to be reported. Social, economic and cultural rights are almost entirely absent from human rights coverage in the international media. The key challenge for media professionals is to cover human rights issues accurately and consistently, in ways that give their audiences enough background and continuity of coverage to make sense of the events that are reported. This objective is by no means achieved regularly.

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MEDIA and HUMAN RIGHTS

About the Book

The media play an enormously important role in protection of human rights. They expose human rights violations and serve as medium for different voices to be heard. But journalists and the media themselves are put at risk when reporting critical human rights issues. The research studies on human rights reporting and working in hostile environments are needed to be disclosed to the public. This book, arising out of chapters contributed by media professionals and mass communication educators. The book consists of 21 chapters, mainly drawn from first hand case studies on various issues. Their topics range widely over time, for the last two decades and the challenges of 21st century. Taken together, these studies complement each other to provide a detailed view of media role on human rights in the light of the latest exploration. Apart from introduction, the chapters are divided into four sections: I. Media Coverage on Human Rights, II. Media on Dalits, Disabled and Children, III. Media and Gender and IV. Media and Democracy. In this book, the reader will surely catch up with well-researched and enlightening articles.

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